



Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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FBIS-NES-96-090
Wednesday
8 May 1996

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Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-090

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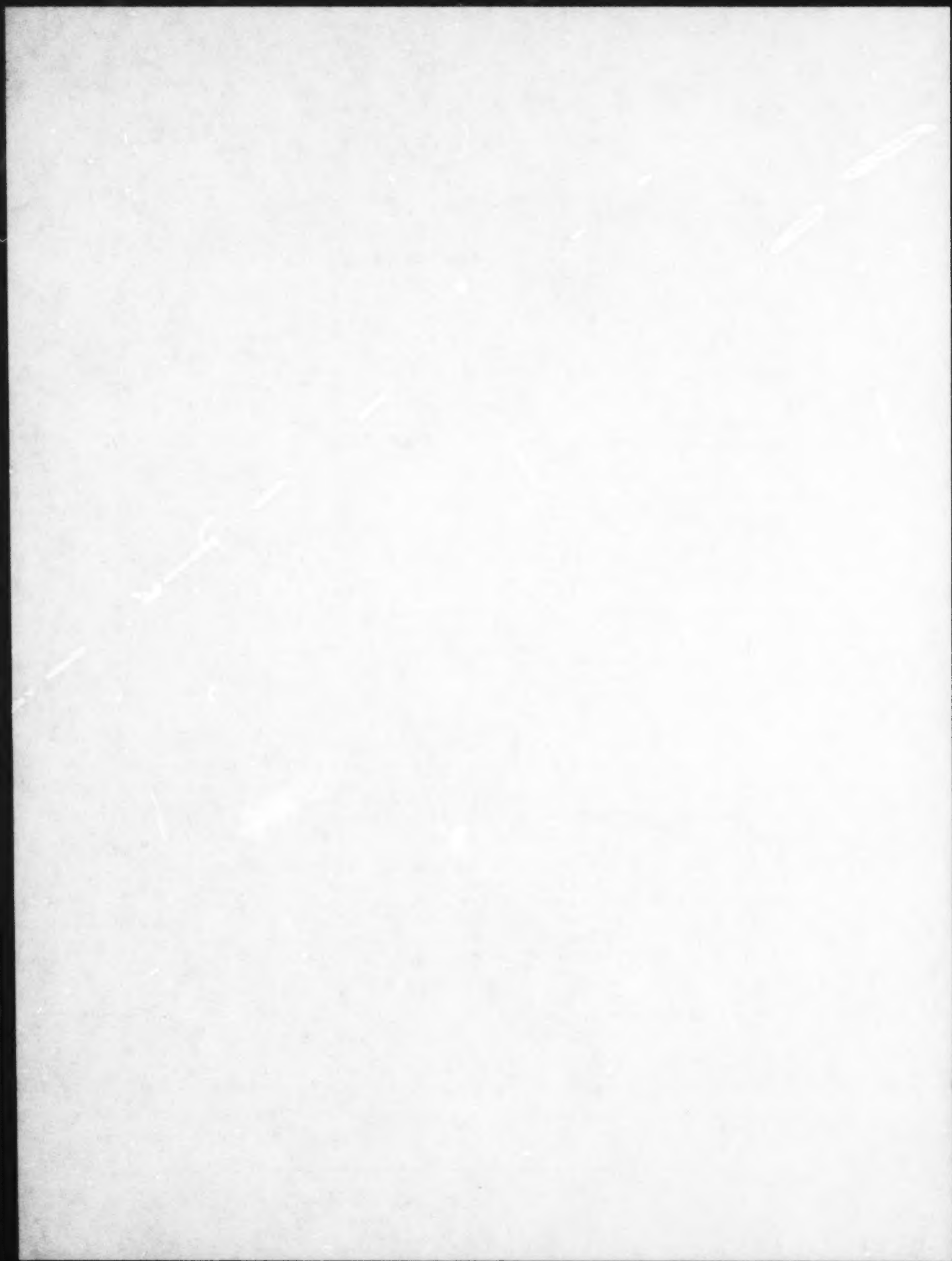
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Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 30 Apr
NC0705195696

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 30 April edition of the Cairo Arabic language newspaper that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS: 1. Lebanese-Israeli Agreement Seen as Triumph for Resistance 2. British Bulletin Cited on U.S. Plan To Invade Sudan 3. Report Notes Signing of U.S.-Israeli Strategic Agreement 4. Writer Sees World in 'Age of Terrorism' 5. America Seen as Real Enemy 6. Strikes Against U.S.-Israeli Interests Urged 7. Article Examines Israeli Aggression on Lebanon 8. Writer Urges Policies Compatible With Developments 9. Rally Preaches Stopping Normalization With Zionists 10. Chicago Mosque Reportedly Stormed Without Warrant 11. Muslim Brothers Warn Against Striking Hamas, Jihad, Amending Charter 12. 'Id Sermons Preach Jihad, Assistance to Lebanon

LEBANESE-ISRAELI AGREEMENT SEEN AS TRIUMPH FOR RESISTANCE

A 600-word factual report by Muhammad Jamal 'Arafah, page 1, says that "the new Katyusha agreement confirmed the Zionist enemy's failure to achieve its goals." He remarks that "the Lebanese Islamic Resistance succeeded in forcing its terms on the Zionists.... and affirmed its lawful right to keep up its operations against Israeli enemy troops as well as its right to defend itself."

BRITISH BULLETIN CITED ON U.S. PLAN TO INVADE SUDAN

An 800-word report by "the Arab affairs editor" on page 1, cites the British "Foreign Report bulletin" on "Eritrean preparations, directly supported by the Americans and Israelis, to invade Sudan from the east and overthrow the government in September in order to check the proliferation of Islamic extremism in the African continent."

According to the report, the invasion was "planned" by the CIA, Ethiopia, Uganda, and the southern Sudanese rebels are expected to join it "later," the report says.

It adds that Sudanese diplomats link the information the Foreign Report provides with the possible imposition of military sanctions on Sudan around 10 July, 60 days from the imposition of the present diplomatic sanctions. This is to ensure an easy invasion two months later,

when the Sudanese Army will have exhausted most of its weapons in its war against the rebels.

REPORT NOTES SIGNING OF U.S.-ISRAELI STRATEGIC AGREEMENT

An unattributed 300-word report on page 1 notes the signing in Washington of "the most dangerous strategic agreement yet between the United States and Israel." With its three major articles, the agreement guarantees for the Israeli army "total qualitative supremacy" over Arab and neighboring states, the report says.

WRITER SEES WORLD IN 'AGE OF TERRORISM'

In his 500-word column "The Natives" on page 12, Muhammad 'Abd- al-Quddus remarks that 'Id al-Adha comes this year "in the worst ever circumstances at the local and international level," because we are truly living in the "age of terrorism." He notes that many of his friends, who reject terrorism and have never contemplated conspiring against the regime are "behind prison bars."

Pointing out that "the police regime that bears down on our throats arrested my friends," he wonders when the people are going to get rid of that "nightmare" and when Egypt will enjoy real freedom.

The writer stresses the need "to stand firmly against the stray bullets that kill tourists and policemen" to avoid losing credibility and becoming like the "government writers" who hate the Islamic trend and apply double standards, "rejecting people's terrorism and supporting government terrorism." Affirming that "all terrorism is rejected," he offers condolences to the families of the policemen who were killed while they were "performing their duty."

Turning to the international situation, he sees "sheer terrorism embodied in the sons of Zion, who try to impose their will on the region." Pointing out that the Arab position, particularly the Egyptian, is "valueless", he notes that "only the Islamic Resistance is capable of standing up firmly" to that terrorism. He describes the Egyptian position on developments in Lebanon as "extremely weak and faltering" and notes that while the "Zionist enemy" was pouncing on Lebanon, Yasir 'Arafat was amending the Palestinian charter.

AMERICA SEEN AS REAL ENEMY

Al-Sayyid al-Ghadban's 1,000-word article on page 12 sees America as the "head of the serpent and the true enemy."

Looking for words to describe the "black American spite against Arabs and Muslims," he finds that "only the words uttered in whorehouses" serve the purpose.

The writer notes the atrocities committed in Lebanon, saying that they triggered the "eruption of popular Arab and Islamic wrath against the actual perpetrator, America, the hired hand, Israel, and the weakness of Arab and Muslim rulers."

The writer believes that Arabs "needed such a harsh ordeal" after years of deception by the U.S. and Israeli propaganda, which presented America as "the savior" and Israel as "the civilized state that seeks peace with its neighbors." He then reviews the American and Israeli roles in "fanning inter-Arab disputes" and shows how many Arabs were deceived into trusting these two states.

But the "ferocious" Israeli aggression on Lebanon cleared the "mist that blurred Arab vision" and made the people see that the American and Israeli peace claims are nothing but the "sedative that paralyzed the Arab and Islamic conflict will."

Al-Ghadban believes it is high time for Arabs to begin their positive action "to regain the weapons of victory we almost lost." He stresses that the Israeli aggression on Lebanon should mark the beginning of "real Arab conciliation". He calls for enhancing the role of the Arab League and allowing freedom to the media to expose America's and Israel's conspiracies and sensitize new generations about their crimes over half a century. He also urges a return to the "boycott weapon".

STRIKES AGAINST U.S-ISRAELI INTERESTS URGED

Ahmad al-Suyufi writes in his 500-word column "A Vision", page 6, that Arab silence to what is happening in Lebanon reminds him of the last Arab ruler of Andalusia, who closed a brilliant page in Muslim history.

He says that the "weak ruling clique... wants to accept condolence over and hold funerals for all Muslims."

Fed up with them, the nation awaits someone who can raise his voice with rejection and protests, he says, pointing out that the entire nation "applauded and was proud of al-Asad when he refused to receive Christopher," and paid tribute to Hizballah, which has become "a symbol of the steadfastness of this nation."

The writer adds that the nation pins hopes on "Katyusha jihad and suicide operations," because only this will overcome the Zionist enemy and break its nose.

He stresses the need to "strike at the American and Zionist interests in the region," at very least by boycotting their goods.

ARTICLE EXAMINES ISRAELI AGGRESSION ON LEBANON

Majdi Ahmad Husayn's 5,000-word article, page 2, examines the Israeli aggression on Lebanon and concludes that it culminated in "the defeat of the Israeli attack and the victory of Hizballah and the Lebanese resistance."

He notes that Israel knew from the outset that it was impossible to destroy Hizballah bases. But it wanted to destroy even part of these bases. Originally, Israel sought to "drive a wedge" between the resistance on the one hand and the Lebanese Government, Syria, and the Lebanese people on the other by showing the high cost involved in resistance action. "But Israel was defeated in these three fields. The Lebanese Government was in harmony with Hizballah, Hizballah's shares soared high among the various classes of Lebanese people, and the Syrian command demonstrated remarkable steadfastness, teaching the enemies and weak Arabs a lesson in pan-Arab pride," Husayn says, noting that Damascus was the only Arab capital that "cut the U.S. secretary of state down to size."

Husayn points out that after two weeks of barbaric bombing, Israel failed to disarm Hizballah or prevent it from resisting and the United States had to rush to "save Israel from embarrassment."

The writer finds it "ridiculous" that the "formidable Israeli army" should ask Christopher to demand the resistance stop bombing northern Israel, as well as Israeli troops in the occupied part of Lebanon. He draws from this that "the gutless army is unable to defend itself directly. It killed Lebanese civilians to trade their safety for that of its troops."

Elaborating on the "cowardice" of the Israeli army, Husayn notes that the Israeli troops were bombing "at a distance" to avoid direct combat or engagement. He says that "coward armies want to fight without losses," and the "formidable" Israeli army was unable to advance one step inside Lebanon. It, therefore, asked Christopher to protect it with "a diplomatic agreement."

Husayn sees the April agreement as "an amended version" of the July 1993 agreement. "Thus, the agreement was a new victory for Hizballah, since the slight amendments were only an attempt by Israel to save face," Husayn says. He notes that the new agreement differs from the old one in two things only: It is written and provides for international monitoring of any violation. "In essence, the new agreement is an extension of the

previous one, which provides for Hizballah's and the Lebanese resistance's lawful right to launch operations against Israeli troops in south Lebanon," Husayn writes.

He adds: Concluding such a written agreement, in which a small party composed of a few thousand stands on one end and greater Israel on the other, is the biggest proof of Israel's weakness and to the fact that it is not qualified... to humiliate Arabs."

Husayn believes that the Israeli aggression deserves an extraordinary position, because Israel went too far in its arrogance and brutality. He stresses that "Jewish tyranny will not stop unless it is faced with an all-out Arab and Islamic resistance." He points out that the world "will not fight for Arab goals so long as Arabs are giving in to the fait accompli." He stresses that "we should take the initiative to benefit from the international powers that reject the U.S. domination," noting that France's participation in bringing about a cease-fire would not have existed if it were not for Hizballah's firm jihad.

Husayn reviews the history of peace between Arabs and Israel and concludes that a "sense of frustration" after repeated defeats made the Arabs think that they were incapable of fighting Israel and that they should make friends with it since they could not eliminate it. He adds that the rulers put all their eggs in one basket and ignored their people, just like al-Sadat did when he said that "99 percent of the cards were in America's hand". This approach deepened our sense of weakness and helplessness, he says, criticizing the rulers who changed education curricula to teach the children how to yield, while Israel's children were being taught how to kill the enemy and destroy their economy.

He believes, however, that it is never too late to rectify our position. "We need an Arab summit that can start uniting the wills of Cairo, Damascus, and Riyadh to adjust the peace process and the conflict with Israel on the basis of Arab rights and the right of all regional people to live in peace and safety without discrimination," he says.

Husayn adds that bringing about Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon requires a set of steps: Stopping normalization with Israel in all fields, freezing multilateral negotiations, and healing the Arab schism."

We have to prepare for the coming stage now instead of limiting ourselves to counter-reactions to the Israeli actions, he says, adding that Egypt must be the "nucleus of a bloc that involves Egypt and Syria, and later includes Libya, Iraq, Sudan, Lebanon, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia". He believes that this "strong nucleus" will attract all Arabs.

WRITER URGES POLICIES COMPATIBLE WITH DEVELOPMENTS

Mustafa Mashhur's 1,000-word article on page 5 notes that 'Id al-Adha comes this year in "an atmosphere clouded with conspiracies against Muslims' beliefs and homes and charged by the instruments of deception and destruction."

He is pained by the fact that "local policies and conduct respond to pressure or agreements with the usurping enemies, agreements that waste our rights and capitulate to the terms of the usurpers."

Mashhur criticizes the Palestine National Council for "abandoning a charter that emphasizes the Palestinian people's right to their land from the river to the sea." He points out that the amendment "condones the presence of the usurping Zionist being that bears down on their land and chest."

He is also sorry that 'Id al-Adha comes this year amid "bloody incidents" in which Egypt loses the elite of its sons in the police force and tourists are killed in acts of violence. But he regrets that "false accusations" are leveled at the Muslim Brothers, who have an honorable record in defending the nation's interests and standing up to all forms of aggression.

He notes that the brothers in Lebanon are being subjected to the ugliest Zionist crimes, with the support of the United States, and that the Palestinian people are being humiliated under siege.

He appeals to all Muslim leaders and governments to "review the current policies" to make them compatible with developments and to return to true Islam.

RALLY PREACHES STOPPING NORMALIZATION WITH ZIONISTS

Khalid Yunus reports on page 8 on a national rally held by "the humanitarian relief committee of the Doctor's Association" on 25 April to support the Lebanese people. Al-Azhar Grand Imam Shaykh Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, Pope Shanudah, the Lebanese ambassador, and representatives of the Foreign Ministry and the Arab League attended the rally.

The 2,000 word report describes the rally as "an outburst of wrath against the deceptive aggression launched by the Zionists, the grandsons of apes and pigs, against our brothers in Lebanon."

The rally issued a number of recommendations urging, among others, the setting up of committees to resist normalization with the Zionists, the expulsion of the Israeli enemy, and the withdrawal of the Egyptian ambassador from Israel.

The conferees condemned the obvious American bias toward Israel, the American-Israeli agreement, and the Turkish-Israeli agreement. They called for an emergency Arab summit meeting to discuss ways to stop the Israeli aggression on Lebanon. They also called on the Palestine National Council to postpone the amendment of the Palestinian national charter.

The rally praised Hizballah's firm resistance and thanked the People's Assembly for postponing a visit to Tel Aviv by a parliamentary delegation. The conferees thanked the Foreign Ministry, particularly Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, for his daring national stand.

In his speech, Shaykh Sayyid Tantawi noted that heavenly religions stand by a man who is subjected to injustice and urge him to fight for his right, pointing out that a person who dies in pursuit of his rights is a "martyr".

Al-Azhar shaykh reaffirmed that "the young men of the Islamic Resistance who blow themselves up to inflict losses on the enemy are among the best martyrs and that their enemies will go to hell."

Shaykh Tantawi said that the history of the Jews is "blood stained and marked with deception and treachery." He urged Arabs to wake up and the world to stand by the oppressed.

He stressed that rights always need power to protect them and to repulse aggression. He urged Muslims to support the Lebanese people and give them all the necessary assistance.

CHICAGO MOSQUE REPORTEDLY STORMED WITHOUT WARRANT

An unattributed 50-word report on page 8 says that "20 American policemen have brutally stormed Chicago mosque and arrested its imam as he was giving the Friday sermon."

The report adds that the policemen "treaded with their shoes on the worshipers, tore the Koran, and sprayed some worshipers with tear gas."

According to the report, the policemen "ridiculed Islam" as they were leaving the mosque. The report notes that the mosque was stormed "without a warrant."

MUSLIM BROTHERS WARN OF STRIKING HAMAS, JIHAD, AMENDING CHARTER

An unattributed 400-word report on page 8 cites Kamal al-Hilbawi, "official spokesman for the Muslim Brothers in the west," as denouncing the measures the Palestinian Authority adopted in oppressing the Palestinian people. In a message to 'Arafat, al-Hilbawi said that no one can condone of the Palestinian Authority's bias to the "historic enemy of the nation". He also denounced

the detention and torture of hundreds of the "elite" of the Palestinian people and the storming of homes and universities, warning that this can light the fuse of a civil war.

Al-Hilbawi appealed to 'Arafat not to hold the Palestine National Council meeting to amend the national charter.

'ID SERMONS PREACH JIHAD, ASSISTANCE TO LEBANON

An unattributed 250-word report on page 1 gives an account of 'Id al-Adha sermons in various parts of the republic.

In Alexandria, Shaykh Ahmad al-Mahallawi denounced the Zionist crimes in Lebanon, urging Arab states to boycott all the states that supported the Zionist aggression. Shaykh Muhammad 'Abd-al-Mun'im said that the Zionist siege on the Palestinian people and the brutal raids on Lebanon "should not go unpunished," while Shaykh Wajdi Ghunaym urged Muslims to "insist on jihad against the Jewish and American enemies of the nation."

In Cairo, Shaykh Salah Nassar stressed the need to clear the hearts of Muslims and agree on amity and cooperation instead of division.

Shaykh Muhammad Farid 'Abd-al-Khaliq urged Muslims to supply Lebanon with weapons and all forms of financial and moral support to prove to America and Israel that "we are not a weak nation."

Page 4 of the newspaper features a number of reports providing full coverage of 'Id sermons all over the republic.

Political Islam Review: 'AQIDATI 30 Apr NC0705104196

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 30 April edition of the Cairo Arabic language newspaper 'AQIDATI that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS: 1. Israeli 'Aggression' Against Lebanon Assailed 2. Islamic Thinker Defends Hizballah, Says U.S. 'Eternal Enemy' 3. U.S. Threat To Use Nuclear Weapons Against Libya Criticized 4. Al-Azhar Imam Says Shari'ah Knows No Fanaticism 5. Ulema Stress Islamic Ethics as Basis of Virtuous Society 6. Privatization Said in Line With Islamic Shari'ah 7. Islamic Punishment for Theft Protects Society, Prevents Crime 8. Head

**of Islamic Center in Singapore Interviewed 9.
Columnist Attacks Russia Over Dudayev's Killing**

**ISRAELI 'AGGRESSION' AGAINST LEBANON
ASSAILED**

In a 350-word editorial on page 3, the newspaper says Israel's "brutal massacres" against innocent Lebanese people over a 16-day period constitute an "unjustifiable sin." Maintaining that the Israeli military operation in Lebanon dealt a "fatal blow" to the peace process, the paper asks: "After these crimes, who will believe and trust those who keep no promise or pledge?" It says peace-seeking peoples woke up to the bitter fact that the world is still being ruled by the law of the jungle. The editorial criticizes the international community for its reluctance and delayed intervention to end Israel's "savage aggression and unlimited barbarism" against civilians. Noting also that Arabs and Muslims were unable to do anything to end the Israeli attack, the paper urges them to move quickly to end their differences and divisions.

—In a 200-word article on page 20, columnist 'Adil Dayf says the Israeli "aggression" against Lebanon showed that invasion, expansion, and killing of innocent civilians are genuine Israeli policies; there is no difference between hawks and doves. He says the aggression also showed that the Arabs are weak and divided and that the United Nations was biased toward Israel and the United States. The writer says Israeli will be mistaken if it believes that it can end the resistance: "Arab resistance will remain, and the struggle will continue for a better future and for the liberation of southern Lebanon and the rest of the occupied Arab territories." He says the region will not see peace if Israel continues its aggression against the Arabs, and he warns that violence will only result in counterviolence.

**'SLAMIC THINKER DEFENDS HIZBALLAH,
SAYS U.S. 'ETERNAL ENEMY'**

Pages 10 and 11 contain an interview with "prominent Islamic thinker" Dr. 'Abd-al-Sabur Marzuq by Muhammad al-Abnudi and Jamal Salim. The date and place of the interview are not given. Asked about Israel's "brutal massacres against Muslims in Lebanon," Dr. Marzuq blames this on the "miserable" situation of the Muslim world. "What is happening in Lebanon now," he says, "is an inevitable result of [Muslim] divisions." He adds: "I am very sad that in such an ugly situation, some [Arab] kings sobbed over the murder of Rabin but failed to shed any tears when Jerusalem was lost or when Rabin himself announced that Jerusalem is the eternal capital of Israel." Dr. Marzuq criticizes Arab normalization

with Israel, which, he says, makes Arab citizens feel that they have become slaves to the Israelis.

On Hizballah's role, Dr. Marzuq says: "Hizballah, no matter what is said about it, is playing a needed role, preserving the spirit of resistance in the nation. It is doing what all the regimes combined failed to do." He adds: "Hizballah's activity is respected and appreciated." He says that when the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, carried out two operations against Israel, the United States rushed to arrange an international conference "to justify any Israeli action in the region." In an implicit reference to a recent religious ruling by Shaykh Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, the new imam of al-Azhar, concerning Hamas operations, Dr. Marzuq says: "Very regrettably, we find some of our shaykhs saying that those who are defending their land, religion, and honor are not martyrs. What shame is greater than this?"

Dr. Marzuq says the new world order is unfair to Muslims and to poor nations. He says this order, which is dominated by the United States, is allowing Israel to possess nuclear weapons and denying Muslims this right; it is also labelling the jihad practiced by Muslims as terrorism. Marzuq concludes that the United States "is the eternal enemy of Islam and Muslims." Dr. Marzuq calls for intellectual dialogue among all trends in Egypt and the Muslim world to serve the nation and expresses the view that "foolish acts" by some Muslims, like filing suits demanding separation of wives from their husbands, have distorted the image of Islam.

**U.S. THREAT TO USE NUCLEAR WEAPONS
AGAINST LIBYA CRITICIZED**

In a 400-word article on page 10, columnist Majdi Salim sharply criticizes the United States for its threats against Libya. Citing a statement by U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry that "Libya will be attacked by nuclear weapons" if it proceeds with its plans to produce chemical weapons, the writer says the American threat to Libya is nothing new. What is new, however, is the threat to use nuclear weapons against that country, he says. Salim maintains that this American threat is "a major crime threatening the very bases on which the agreements on nuclear production and testing were built." Under international agreements, he explains, nuclear states undertake not to threaten nonnuclear countries with nuclear weapons. But noting that the United States threatened Libya, Iraq, and Iran with the use of nuclear weapons, the writer asks: "Can we then trust the United States when it makes promises? Can we believe it when it claims concern about world peace and security and about human rights, or even when it says it is a guarantor of the peace process?" "Certainly not," he answers. He says the United States will keep its

promises only when it comes to Israel. "Let us remember what Israel and the United States did in Lebanon," he concludes.

AL-AZHAR IMAM SAYS SHARI'AH KNOWS NO FANATICISM

In a 1,500-word report on page 3, Musa Hal cites al-Azhar Grand Imam Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi addressing graduate preachers who came from various Islamic countries to attend a training course at al-Azhar. Tantawi tells the preachers that Egypt and al-Azhar always open their arms to Muslim learners to teach them true Islam. He urges them to serve as models of good conduct in their countries. He is cited as saying: "We fight every aggression against peaceful people. We fight terrorism, extremism, and injustice. We are the people of a unambiguous shari'ah." Tantawi stresses that al-Azhar offers true, sound knowledge of Islam "removed from blind fanaticism and intellectual deviation." The reporter also cites some participants in the course as praising al-Azhar and urging this institution to offer more religious assistance to their countries.

ULEMA STRESS ISLAMIC ETHICS AS BASIS OF VIRTUOUS SOCIETY

In a 3,000-word report on pages 8 and 9, Nadir 'Amarah and Mamduh al-'Ashri cite ulema and others in a socio-religious seminar with college students in the city of Damietta. Students are told that Islamic ethics are the foundation on which a good Muslim society is built. Adherence to these ethics will immunize the youths from social diseases such as drugs, theft, gambling, and the sexual harassment of girls.

PRIVATIZATION SAID IN LINE WITH ISLAMIC SHARI'AH

In a 1,000-word article on page 4, Dr. Husayn Shihatah, a professor at al-Azhar's Commerce Faculty, discusses the responsibilities of workers under the privatization program. He begins by stating that privatization does not conflict with the Islamic method as long as the Islamic shari'ah is applied and the employees, employers, and the country are not harmed. He tells workers that their problems are not solved by protests and strikes, but by harder work and increased competence. He says the problems that emerge when the ownership of businesses is transferred from the government to the public sector are solved when workers stick to ethical and religious values and do their best in their jobs, when the government gives incentives to workers and asks new investors to provide enough guarantees that workers will not be harmed, and when the government sells businesses to those who are really loyal to the country.

ISLAMIC PUNISHMENT FOR THEFT PROTECTS SOCIETY, PREVENTS CRIME

In a 500-word article on page 5, Dr. Salah Zaydan, from al-Azhar University, defends the Islamic punishment for theft and fraud, saying it is necessary to protect public funds and society. "We find that societies that apply God's shari'ah insofar as theft and other forms of aggression concerning money are concerned are remarkably and admirably clean societies, enjoying security and safety day and night in all their cities and villages." Theft and similar crimes are rare or nonexistent in these countries, he says, and "the people and rulers of these societies feel proud that they are applying their God's shari'ah."

HEAD OF ISLAMIC CENTER IN SINGAPORE INTERVIEWED

Page 20 contains a 1,000-word interview with Shaykh Tahir Bin-Muhammad Bin-'Isa al-Haddad, head of the Islamic Center in Singapore, by Mustafa Yasin. The date and place of the interview are not given. Al-Haddad discusses the role and activity of his center, praises al-Azhar's help for Singapore's Muslims, and urges Muslim unity and efforts "to save humanity from deviation and corruption." He says the center works to bring up Muslim children in Singapore according to Islamic principles and values, and he notes that Muslims in his country are practicing their religious rites freely.

COLUMNIST ATTACKS RUSSIA OVER DUDAYEV'S KILLING

In a 400-word article on page 6, columnist Basyuni al-Hulwani launches a stinging attack on Russia and President Boris Yeltsin against the backdrop of the killing of Chechen leader Dudayev. He labels Dudayev as "an Islamic leader and a heroic mujahid who set an example in defending his religion and homeland and firmly and determinedly challenged Russian aggression and injustice." He says Dudayev showed the world how much the Russians and Yeltsin hate Islam. The writer contends that the Chechen "jihad" will grow stronger and Dudayev will remain in the conscience of every Muslim.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Meets PRC, U.S. Envoys; PNC Annals 'Savage' Acts

JN0705121596 *Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1100 GMT 7 May 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza, from "Today's Events" program]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Yasir 'Arafat received the PRC representative to the National Authority at the Presidency in Gaza this morning. The PRC envoy handed the president a letter from the PRC president, which included an official invitation for President Yasir 'Arafat to visit the PRC. The discussion revolved around latest developments and Palestinian-PRC ties.

President 'Arafat also received U.S. Consul General Edward Abington at the Presidency this afternoon. The meeting addressed developments in the peace process in light of the ongoing final-status negotiations. The U.S. role in supporting the peace process was also discussed.

In another development, the Palestine National Council [PNC] strongly condemned yesterday's military actions against Palestinian citizens in Qalqilyah Governorate. In a statement read today by 'Imad Musa, director of the PNC Information Department, the PNC said these actions are savage. Around 17 citizens were wounded in Qalqilyah yesterday when Israeli occupation troops opened fire on, and used tear gas against, hundreds of citizens who opposed the occupation forces in defense of their territory. The occupation bulldozers had begun bulldozing land in Qalqilyah.

The PNC denounced these practices at a time when the Palestinian and Israeli delegations are in Taba to discuss negotiations on final-status issues. The PNC said these attacks are a new violation of the peace agreements signed between the Palestinian and Israeli sides. The PNC Speakership appealed to all peace-loving forces worldwide to side with the Palestinian people until the Palestinian dream of an independent state, with Jerusalem as its capital, is realized. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Israeli Official—Palestinian State 'Within 3 Years'

BR0805111196 *Paris AFP in French*
1552 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Paris, 7 May (AFP) — "If all goes well, a Palestinian state will be established within three years," with Jerusalem as its symbolic "capital," [Israel's] Dr. Ron Pundak said in an interview with the weekly magazine L'EXPRESS (9-15 May). Dr. Pundak is the man in charge of the negotiations on the final

status of Jerusalem and one of the main architects of the Oslo accords.

Asked whether Jerusalem could become the capital of two states, Mr. Pundak replied: "I am going to upset some people, but for me it is a certainty. If all goes well, a Palestinian state will be established within three years."

"It is in Israel's interest: One cannot imagine a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation without a Palestinian state," he added, stressing that this state "while having its government, its administration, and its own laws would be totally demilitarized, comparable to the Vatican City."

"And with Jerusalem as its capital — why not?" Mr. Pundak added, though stating that in his opinion this "peace scenario can come about only on two conditions: no more terrorist assassination attempts in Israel and the sincere willingness of the Palestinians to live side by side with us."

These statements were made as Palestinians and Israelis opened on Sunday [5 May] the final phase of their negotiations on the creation of a Palestinian state and the fate of Jerusalem. The Palestinians for their part have solemnly affirmed their intention to found their independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

However, Mr. Pundak recognizes that "the symbolic weight of the city (Jerusalem) is such that we will have to move forward cautiously." "For us Israelis Jerusalem is one and indivisible."

From this point of departure Mr. Pundak said that one of the options being examined for the future status of Jerusalem is the "principle of an open city," whose "Jewish, Muslim, or Christian populations could move from east to west and vice versa, learn to live together, and finally to respect each other."

Palestinian Affairs: Sakhr Habash Says Charter 'Frozen, Not Canceled'

TA0705162796 *Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic*
5 May 96 p 6

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Amman, AL-NAHAR Office — Sakhr Habash, member of the PLO Executive Committee [as published], has said that despite the decision adopted by the Palestine National Council [PNC] at its recent meeting to amend some articles of the charter relating to Israel, this decision will not go into effect until Israel delivers on its promises to the Palestinian National Authority. [passage omitted]

Habash added that the text of the charter remains as it is since it has not been amended yet. Therefore, it is

frozen, not canceled. Israel's adherence to previous and subsequent commitments will be taken into consideration when the new charter is drafted. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Says Consultations on New Cabinet Not Completed

JN0805105596 *Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
0900 GMT 8 May 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Rafah]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat said he has not yet completed consultations on the formation of the new council of ministers. 'Arafat said this at a session the Palestinian Legislative Council held in the Rafah municipality's public library at 1100 today.

In reply to a request by the speaker's office of the Legislative Council, 'Arafat said: If I complete consultations this afternoon, I will announce the cabinet. If I complete consultations tomorrow, I will announce it tomorrow, and if I need more time, I will ask the speakers' office for more time.

Legislative Council Speaker Ahmad Quray' said he is confident the president will present the cabinet tomorrow. He added: We will wait until tomorrow. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Security Official Says 400 Policemen To Deploy in Hebron

TA0705154596 *Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic*
7 May 96 p 2

[Report by Ayman Abu-Laylah]

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Majayidah, official in charge of national security in the Gaza Governorate, has said that the Palestinian Authority (PA) is totally prepared to deploy in Hebron and that it has completed all its measures in this connection.

He said that the first Palestinian force to enter Hebron will consist of 400 policemen. They will do so as soon as the problem with redeployment in the city is resolved between the Palestinian and Israeli sides.

The Palestinian official denounced Israel's nonfulfillment of the agreements signed with the PA. He said that Israel's nonadherence to the redeployment deadline was a flagrant violation of the agreements signed with the PA.

Maj. Gen. al-Majayidah said that contacts are currently being held through the Palestinian-Israeli liaison committees with regard to implementing the agreement on redeployment in Hebron. He added that the Palestinian

side will urge the Israeli side to honor the commitments and dues of the peace process and stop placing more obstacles in the way of the implementation of the Oslo accord, especially since the PA has fulfilled all its commitments.

Al-Majayidah strongly condemned the Israeli prime minister's recent remarks in which he said that redeployment in Hebron will be postponed until after the Israeli elections, that there was no intention to evacuate the settlers, and that the Ibrahimi Mosque would remain under Israeli control. He linked these remarks to the Israeli elections and to electoral propaganda for Peres and the Labor Party.

The Palestinian official strongly denied Israel's recent allegations that some high-ranking PA officials had transported Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] activists in their private cars to the West Bank. He stressed that such a thing can never happen.

Palestinian Affairs: Hebron Mayor on Israeli Redeployment, Ibrahimi Mosque

TA0705173596 *Ramallah AL-AYYAM in Arabic*
6 May 96 p 3

[Interview with Hebron Mayor Mustafa 'Abd-al-Nabi al-Natshah by correspondent 'Abd-al-Ra'uf Arna'ut; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Arna'ut] The Israeli settlers have announced their intention to confiscate houses in the old city of Hebron under the pretext that they immigrated from it in 1929 and that they seek to reclaim those houses. What is your comment?

[Al-Natshah] These allegations are baseless. They owned houses that they sold to the Arabs. During the British Mandate they used to buy and sell houses. In 1929 the Jews sold the houses to the Arabs in the city through legal transactions.

As for the talk that they have recently taken possession of houses in the city, these are only acts of illegal deception carried out through some middlemen. I stress that there is no place that they can claim except al-Dabuya and two neighboring houses.

[Arna'ut] Peres has decided to postpone redeployment from the city until after the elections. How do you view this step?

[Al-Natshah] It is a fatal hesitation by the Israeli Government in implementing what it committed itself to in the Oslo Accord. This is a bad move that shakes its credibility in front of its partners with regard to fulfilling its commitments toward the Palestinian people.

Moreover, this move makes people skeptical about the peace process, because Israel promises today and does not deliver tomorrow. Therefore, what is the value of a peace process in which a major party, namely Israel, does not implement its commitments.

This fatal hesitation by Peres is just electoral propaganda — either that or he is unable to fulfill his commitments under pressure from his army's generals who do not want their army to withdraw from Hebron. All this is not in the interest of peace.

[Arna'ut] Is redeployment from the city in stages acceptable?

[Al-Natshah] It is not possible to divide redeployment. I cannot understand statements, especially since the Civil Administration and the army have transferred many of their installations from the locations that will be handed over to the Palestinian Authority [PA].

Moreover, the announcement by the Civil Administration and the army that they are prepared to withdraw from the city within hours raises questions about the reason for dividing redeployment. This is idle talk and makes no sense.

[Arna'ut] What is your comment on Peres' statements that the Ibrahimi Mosque will remain under Israeli control even after redeployment?

[Al-Natshah] It is electoral propaganda. The mosque has been purely Islamic for 1,400 years. It should belong only to the Muslims. As for non-Muslims, they will be allowed to visit it as a holy shrine.

[Arna'ut] What about the fact that 15 percent of the city's area will remain under Israeli control?

[Al-Natshah] These are called special status areas. They will remain as they are with joint Israeli-Palestinian patrols until the final solution talks are conducted on their status.

[Arna'ut] What is the impact of this Israeli hesitation on the Palestinian residents of the city?

[Al-Natshah] It frustrates the residents, especially since they have been suffering since the massacre in the Ibrahimi Mosque. They are now waiting for the PA's arrival to put an end to this suffering.

Every time an announcement is made on the PA's arrival, the residents are taken by surprise by Israel's decision to delay it. This causes frustration. It is bad and does not serve the peace process.

Palestinian Affairs: Sha'th, Shahor Discuss Establishment of Gaza Airport, Port

JN0705145796 *Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1300 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, member of the Legislative Council, and Oren Shahor, coordinator of Israeli occupation activities, today discussed the establishment of a Palestinian airport and port in Gaza. The two sides agreed to set up three civilian, security, and air subcommittees to study the building of the airport. The subcommittees will begin work next week.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Ready To Resume Talks With Hamas Political Leaders

NC0705141096 *Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic*
3 May 96 p 8

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Following his talks with President Husni Mubarak, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat left Cairo yesterday morning for Washington. President Mubarak and 'Arafat discussed the latest developments in the region, developments in the peace process, particularly on the Palestinian track, the arrangements relating to the final-stage negotiations between the Palestinians and Israel, the future of the peace process after the cease-fire in Lebanon, and the results of the Palestine National Council meetings.

In an exclusive statement to AL-MUSAWWAR, 'Arafat said that in his talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton on Thursday (2 May), he will discuss three basic issues, the first of which is the international aid to the Palestinian people, which has not yet materialized despite several U.S. promises. These promises stressed more than once the need to expedite sending this aid. [passage omitted]

'Arafat said that al-Ghul, commander of the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions, has surrendered to the Palestinian National Authority and that Israel is now focusing its demand on Muhammad Dayf, one of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] main commanders who is still in hiding. 'Arafat stressed his readiness to resume dialogue with the Hamas political wing, particularly since most of its leaders have publicly declared their rejection of the actions of the military wing, which used to receive instructions from the Hamas organization in Jordan.

Concluding his statement, 'Arafat said that the results of the Israeli elections cannot be determined despite the limited improvement in Peres' position. He said he believes that the Arabs will be in favor of Peres as the option is to choose between bad and worse. He said if the efforts to unite the Arab lists succeed, the Arabs of Israel may win nine seats, which will be a decisive

factor for the election results. He noted that the efforts to unify the Arab lists are still stumbling.

Palestinian Affairs: Police Seize Bombs During 'Hundreds' of Searches in Gaza

TA0705175096 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 7 May 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Today, the Palestinian police handed over to the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] more than 30 explosive charges they seized in the Gaza Strip, including a 30 kg bomb and belts of explosives that were prepared for suicide terrorists. Military sources told our correspondent Alon Ben-David that over the past several days, the Palestinian police combed hundreds of mosques and homes all over the Strip in an attempt to frustrate terror attacks.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat To Visit Amman 10 May Following Cairo Summit

TA0705130396 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 7 May 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, QUDS PRESS — A responsible Palestinian source stated yesterday that

President Yasir 'Arafat will visit Amman on Friday [10 May] on a one-day official visit to meet with Jordan's King Husayn.

The source added that President 'Arafat, who is expected to participate on 8 or 9 May in the Cairo summit with King Husayn and Egyptian President Husni Mubarak to discuss developments in the Middle East peace process, will later leave for Jordan.

The source noted that the Husayn-'Arafat meeting will be an extension of the tripartite discussions and will also focus on developments in bilateral relations as well as the final stage negotiations between the Palestinians and the Israelis which began in Taba on 5 May. The source said that 'Arafat will also raise with King Husayn the issue of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the presence of the movement's leaders in Jordan.

Algeria

Algeria: Prime Minister Receives, Confers With DPRK Foreign Minister

LD0705214196 Algiers ENTV Television Network
in Arabic 1900 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At the government house today, Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia received Kim Yongnam, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, who is currently on a working visit to our country.

The meeting, which was attended by Algerian Foreign Minister Ahmed Attaf, focused on bilateral relations and ways of bolstering them.

Algeria: Authorities Seize EL WATAN Daily Over Seige Reporting

LD0705193496 Paris Radio France International
in French 1730 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In Algeria, the hostage-taking which started in Algiers on 5 May ended tragically last night, 6 May. Special security forces stormed the commando holding the residents of a tenement house hostage. Eighteen people were killed, including the 16 members of the commando, one hostage, and one police officer. [passage omitted]

The Algerian authorities seized the newspaper EL WATAN today, apparently because of its report on the siege of the commando.

Some 30 papers and magazines were not on sale in Algeria today, owing to the indefinite strike by journalists and administrative staff at El MOUDJAHID, which prints some 30 dailies and weeklies.

Algeria: 100 Officers, Former Defense Minister Asked To Resign

LD0705140796 Paris Radio France International
in French 1230 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Arabic language newspaper AL-HAYAT reports today that about 100 officers of the Algerian armed forces have been asked to retire. Former defense minister General Khaled Nezzar is believed to be one of them.

The newspaper, which cites informed sources in Algiers, reports that changes are expected within the armed forces but it does not give further details.

The daily adds that a major government reshuffle is reportedly about to take place. It is believed that the interior and justice ministers will be affected, among others.

Said Sadi's party, the RCD [Rally for Culture and Democracy], expressed its concern after President Zeroual's announcement of the electoral timetable which makes provision for legislative elections in the middle of 1997. For the RCD, this means, I quote, that there will not be any counter power for nearly two years.

Algeria: Security Forces Report 16 Criminals Killed; Crimes Listed

LD0705173996 Algiers Radio Algiers Network
in Arabic 1600 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Ministry of Interior, Local Authorities, and Environment has issued a statement, in which it says that, acting on information provided by citizens, the security forces on 5 May launched simultaneous operations in various areas of the capital against a group of criminal terrorists. The statement says that the elimination of a part of this group of criminals, who were in an apartment in Said Hamdine district, an Algiers suburb, first required the rescue of the apartment block's inhabitants, after they had been taken hostage by these criminals.

The joint intervention of the security forces led to the elimination of all members of the criminal group, consisting of 16 criminals, including a woman, the wife of one of the criminals.

The communique stresses that among the crimes committed by these terrorists figures are: the assassination of Brigadier General Mohamed Boutigane; retired Colonel Salah Zerdani; Lieutenant Colonel Abdennour Boumezrak; Foudhil Berrah, a former senior administrator; Messrs Said Messai and Mahfoudh Bousebsi, two professors; Mr Rachid Harraig, former chairman of the Algerian Football Federation; and Messrs Boubakeur Belkaid and Mohamed Hardi, two former interior ministers.

They were also behind attacks, using booby-trapped cars, against the Press House and an apartment block in Ain Ennaaja district, a suburb of Algiers. [passage omitted]

During the operations the security forces recovered, in particular, 5 machineguns and 14 automatic pistols, as well as the car and documents belonging to the late Mohamed Hardi which were taken from him after his assassination.

The statement adds that during these operations, a member of the security forces was killed and another injured. Furthermore, a citizen was killed following the operation to rescue hostages in Said Hamdine district.

Algeria: Agreement on \$350 Million Loan Signed With World Bank

LD0705143096 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A loan agreement for \$350 million between Algeria and the World Bank has been signed in Washington following the endorsement of the bank's board of directors on 4 May.

A large part of the loan, estimated at \$300 million, is allocated for restructuring the reform program and aimed at consolidating measures related to reform and privatization. The remaining \$50 million will partially finance the social security network by regulating three joint programs, as follows: programs for the aid of the elderly and the disabled, a short-term employment program, and an economic protection program for the unemployed.

Egypt

Egypt: Mubarak, King Husayn To Hold Summit in Cairo 8 May

NC0705135196 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1315 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 7 May (MENA)—MENA has learned that an Egyptian-Jordanian summit will be held in Cairo, Wednesday [8 May] between President Husni Mubarak and King Husayn of Jordan, who will arrive in Cairo tomorrow morning. MENA has learned that the talks between the two leaders will deal with recent developments in the Middle East, the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, and ways of advancing the peace process and maintaining its momentum. The talks will also deal with bilateral relations and ways of strengthening them in all spheres.

Egypt: Minister on Confronting 'Terrorist' Groups, Initiatives

NC0705191496 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1810 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 7 May (MENA) — Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has stressed that the security services are continuing to implement their strategy of firm, decisive confrontation with the violent groups and all their organizations and structures.

At an expanded meeting attended by senior security commanders and officials from the Interior Ministry, al-Alfi said the security services will not become lax and will not tolerate any attempt to harm the security and stability of the homeland and citizens, and that they will take action toward this end within the framework of legality and the law.

Al-Alfi noted that at present, the security services need to be more vigilant and should double their efforts, in order to complete the successes achieved in the past, when they asserted their control and showed their ability to penetrate terrorist organizations in Egypt and abroad.

Al-Alfi stressed the importance of coordination and total cooperation among all the security services in all sectors. He also underlined the importance of the security commanders' monitoring of the performance level, as well as the importance of recognizing the requirements and needs in order to improve the performance level.

The meeting was attended by the minister's first assistants and assistants who are members of the Higher Police Council, the security directors from all over the Republic, and a number of directors of the ministry's departments and central offices.

Minister al-Alfi praised the support given the security services by all sectors of the population, noting that this support has helped achieve a number of successes and accomplishments. He called on the members of the police to strengthen ties and build bridges with the citizenry, because this cohesion between the police and the population is one of the most important factors in the success of the security services.

Commenting on reports about a so-called initiative by the terrorist groups, Minister al-Alfi said: The ministry has no knowledge of this or any other initiative. The ministry does not hold contacts with these people, who are outside religion and are traitors to the homeland.

He said that the so-called initiative by the terrorists is just a delusion circulated by some lawyers affiliated to the extremist and terrorist trends. He stressed that what is being propagated will not deter the security services from continuing to confront misleading ideas and those who hold them.

Egypt: Column Discusses Clinton's Role as Israel's 'Obedient Son'

NC0805083096 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 3 May 96 p 2

["Comment" column by Ahmad Taha al-Naqr: "The Obedient Child"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Never in the history of Israel — if it has one — or in the 200-year-old United States has a U.S. President given such direct or indirect support to the Israeli Government as Bill Clinton has given to Shim'on Peres' government. Never before has a U.S. President had the courage to reveal his country's collusion and remove the fig leaf that covers its nakedness; the current U.S. President has, through

his commitment to defending the terrorism of the State of Israel and the ugly, premeditated, cold-blooded massacre committed by the Israeli occupation forces against the defenseless civilian women, children, and elderly in Qana, south Lebanon.

"Democratic" Clinton defended this massacre before according its perpetrator, Peres, a hero's welcome at the White House. He also rewarded him by signing the unprecedented joint strategic alliance agreement in accordance with which Israel becomes a U.S. state or U.S. military base in the region. (There are secret articles in this agreement that have not been publicized. It was previously announced that it would contain U.S. recognition of the Israeli nuclear program, which means modernizing, maintaining, and protecting the Israeli nuclear arsenal.)

Thus Clinton can deservedly be described as Israel's "obedient son," who "never refuses a request from it or says no to it." The person describing him thus was Nahum Barnea [name as published], one of the most prominent writers in the Israeli newspaper YEDI'OT AHARONOT. He said: "Clinton believes in Israel's cause and the causes of its current government. He will most likely go down in history as the first U.S. President who behaves like an obedient son and who does not know how to refuse it anything." The Israeli journalist adds — in a clear reference to the Qana massacre — that whoever follows relations between the two countries will be confounded by how far Clinton has gone to defend the killing of so many civilians.

I believe that after this Israeli testimony, talking about the United States as a sponsor of the peace process or even a mediator becomes ridiculous, a way to bury heads in the sand. From now on we need to deal with the United States and Israel as though they are two in one.

Egypt: Paper Blames Iraqi Regime for Continuing UN Sanctions

NC0805064896 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0505 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 8 May (MENA)—AL-AKHBAR blames the Iraqi regime for the continuing

suffering of the Iraqi people. It notes that this suffering and the blockade of Iraq will continue when the UN Security Council renews sanctions because of the regime's failure to fully respect the UN resolutions relating to the Gulf war cease-fire.

The paper says in its editorial today that the real tragedy lies in the international community having no other way to pressure the Iraqi regime into complying with the UN resolutions. Logic, therefore, dictates that the regime should provide every piece of evidence that it is really complying with these resolutions, which were part of the conditions for the cease-fire. Procrastination only worsens the isolation and deprivation of the Iraqi people, the paper says.

The paper explains that many forces, including Egypt, tried to convince the United Nations to ease the sanctions but the Iraqi regime failed to give those who sympathize with the tragedy of the Iraqi people any evidence that it is trying to achieve the humanitarian objective.

The paper calls on the Iraqi rulers to listen to the voice of reason and conscience, to place the interests of their people above every other consideration, and to avoid this kind of incomprehensible political arrogance.

Mauritania

Mauritania: 3 Ministers Changed in Government Reshuffle

LD0705135296 Paris Radio France International
in French 0730 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] There has been a government reshuffle in Mauritania, with the appointment of a new interior minister, [Dah Ould Abdeljalil], who previously was governor of Nouadhibou. The former occupant of this ministry post, Mohamed Lemine Salem Ould Dah, has been made minister of justice.

Three ministers have left the government — the minister for fisheries and the maritime economy, the minister of justice, and the minister of culture and Islamic orientation.

Bahrain**Bahrain: 2 Killed, 5 Injured in Explosion in Manama**

JN0705173496 Manama WAKH in Arabic
1720 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 7 May (WAKH) — A house was destroyed in an explosion that took place in the Sanabis area, close to the capital, Manama, at 1600 [1300 GMT] today.

The explosion resulted in the death of two persons and the injury of five others. Civil Defense services rushed to the scene of the incident as soon as they were notified. They lifted the debris and rushed the wounded to a hospital for treatment. Security services continue their investigations to determine the cause of the incident.

Bahrain: Explosion Death Toll Rises to 3

JN0705202896 Manama WAKH in Arabic
2000 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Manama, 7 May (WAKH) — The number of those killed in the explosion at a house in Sanabis today rose to three after a 3-year-old child died from the injuries he sustained in the blast. WAKH also learned that another 5-year-old child is in serious condition. [passage omitted]

Bahrain: Government Official Cited on Sanabis Blast

NC0805071596 Paris AFP in English
0649 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Manama, May 8 (AFP)—A three-year-old boy and his parents were killed and four other family members wounded in Bahrain when explosives stored at their home blew up, a government official said Wednesday [8 May].

"Initial results of the investigation show (Tuesday's) explosion was caused by the presence and preparation of explosives in the building" in Sanabis, a Shiite Muslim village west of Manama, the official said.

The four injured persons were reported in the hospital under police custody, while the authorities cordoned off the area around the home which was destroyed.

Published photographs showed a gaping hole through a concrete wall with steel reinforcement rods exposed, while a car outside lay demolished under slabs of concrete. [passage omitted]

Bahrain: Booby-Trapped Cigarette Packet Defused; Warnings Issued

NC0705120696 Paris AFP in English
1136 GMT 7 May 96

[Report by V.S. Venkatraman]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Manama, May 7 (AFP)—Two people were wounded when a time bomb exploded at a bus stop while police defused a booby-trapped packet of cigarettes similar to those used in a string of attacks on businesses here, Bahraini sources said Tuesday [7 May].

Two people were taken to a hospital when an explosive device went off late Monday under a seat at a bus stop on al-Muharraq island, where Bahrain's international airport is located northeast of the capital Manama, AL-AYYAM newspaper said. There were no details of their condition.

On Tuesday a "packet of cigarettes filled with explosives" was found at the Zina center in Manama, but it was defused after the authorities evacuated people from the complex, a police officer told AFP.

The building was 20 meters (yards) from a complex housing foreign and local businesses, which was hit before dawn Sunday by several explosions triggered by booby-trapped cigarette packets, he added. Shops and businesses in other locations were also hit in similar attacks that occurred around the same time.

Booby-trapped cigarette packets were also found Sunday at other businesses before they had a chance to explode and were used in a previous attack this year, the authorities said.

The Bahraini authorities on Tuesday publicized warnings to merchants and residents to beware of cigarette packets and other objects that may contain explosives or incendiary material. "WARNING: A cigarette packet containing an incendiary device," ran a caption under a photograph on the front page of the English-language newspaper, the GULF DAILY NEWS. Bahrain's civil defense authorities told the newspaper that saboteurs had used cigarette packets set to explode with timing devices and issued safety guidelines to help merchants and shoppers tackle potential risks.

If a suspicious object is found, they must clear the surrounding area of people, turn off the power supply, spray the object with a fire extinguisher and call the authorities, according to instructions in the GULF DAILY NEWS. Traders should also watch customers to make sure they do not leave bags behind.

The US and other foreign embassies have issued warnings to their citizens since unrest began in December 1994, telling them to watch out for unattended bags and stay away from burning tires because they may contain explosives.

At least 21 people have died in 17 months of anti-government unrest led by Shiite Muslims demanding a restoration of parliament which the Sunni Muslim-led authorities suspended in 1975. A Shiite who had been shot by police was reported by his family to have died Monday of his wounds. But the death has not been confirmed by the authorities.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: French Mirage Pilot Killed in Air Collision While on Patrol

LD0705221796 Paris France-Info Radio in French 2200 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A French pilot has been killed in an air collision in Saudi Arabia while on surveillance patrol of the Iraqi-Saudi Arabian border. His Mirage 2000 struck another aircraft of the same type. However, the latter aircraft was able to land normally.

An investigation is under way.

Iraq: INA Reports Resumption of UN Oil Talks*JN0705195396 Baghdad INA in Arabic
1933 GMT 7 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 7 May (INA)—A short while ago, Iraqi and UN delegations began the second session of the fourth round of their dialogue on the issue of exchanging oil for food, medicine, and other basic needs of the Iraqi people.

Iraq: Cabinet Criticizes U.S., British 'Interference' in UN Talks*JN0705175896 Baghdad INA in Arabic
1705 GMT 7 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 7 May (INA)—The Council of Ministers asserted today that it hoped that the dialogue between Iraq and the United Nations would succeed on the basis of safeguarding the sovereignty, national unity, and dignity of our patient and mujahid people. The Council of Ministers added that if the United States and Britain continue to interfere in the dialogue, they will be responsible for its failure.

In its 16th session today under the chairmanship of President Saddam Husayn, the Council of Ministers — which was briefed on the progress in the dialogue between Iraq and the United Nations — said that any interference by the United States and Britain in the dialogue is considered an illegal act and entails wicked political objectives.

The Council of Ministers praised the stance of the other 13 UN Security Council members who condemned this interference, which is far from the objectives of the United Nations and its charter. The council noted that Iraq has always believed that this dialogue is not an alternative to its clear right, represented in the implementation of Paragraph 22 of Security Council Resolution 687, as a prelude to the complete end to the unjust siege without any restrictions or conditions now that Iraq has fulfilled its commitments.

During the council's discussion of a number of issues related to industrial and agricultural activities, President Saddam Husayn reaffirmed the need to cope with scientific development and progress to continue construction and prosperity. His excellency ordered the encouragement of and investment in Iraq's industrial potential. He highlighted the importance of manufacturing spare parts for agricultural equipment and other machines, whether by the state or the private sector, as part of the development process. His excellency noted that this is also part of the efforts to create jobs and encourage nationalism as one of Iraq's national resources.

The council discussed a number of topics on its agenda and took the necessary recommendations and decisions.

Iraq: Chief Delegate Comments on 2d Session With UN*JN0805114396 Baghdad INA in Arabic
1045 GMT 8 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 8 May (INA) — As part of the fourth round of dialogue on oil for food, medicine, and other basic needs, Iraqi and UN General Secretariat delegations held their second working session yesterday evening. The two delegations held their first session on 6 May. The session was devoted to working out procedures for the official working sessions between the two sides.

Following the second working session, Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, head of the Iraqi delegation, told reporters the two delegations are concentrating on the original draft of the memorandum of understanding reached by the two delegations on 10 April prior to U.S.-British interference in the dialogue.

Ambassador al-Anbari said the changes introduced to the memorandum of understanding because of U.S.-British interference are tendentious. This is because an agreement was reached on 10 April. All actions since 10 April are illegal and improper attempts by parties that have nothing to do with the talks. Dr. al-Anbari added that in its dialogue with Iraq, the UN General Secretariat delegation refers the agreement reached on 10 April. Iraqi and UN delegations are expected to hold another working session this evening, Baghdad time.

President Saddam Husayn chaired the Cabinet's 16th session yesterday evening. The Cabinet stressed that Iraq wants the dialogue with the United Nations to succeed on the basis of preserving Iraq's sovereignty, national unity, and the dignity of our enduring, struggling people. However, if U.S.-British interference in the dialogue continues, then the United States and Britain will be held responsible for the failure of the talks. This is because this interference is illegal and implies malicious political objectives. The Cabinet also asserted that the dialogue is not an alternative to Iraq's clear right to have Paragraph 22 of Security Council Resolution 687 implemented as a prelude to a complete, unconditional end to the unfair blockade, now that Iraq has fulfilled its obligations.

Iraq: 'Limited Scope' Cited in Oil-for-Food Agreement

MM0805101396 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
8 May 96 pp 1, 6

[Report by Randah Taqiyy-al-Din and Muhammad 'Al-lam: "Al-Qaysi in Cairo; French Circles Cast Doubt on U.S. Intentions; Washington Does Not Rule Out Agreement in 'Oil-For-Food' Negotiations"]

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, Washington, Paris, Cairo — Western and Iraqi sources have left limited scope for a possible reconciliation between the Iraqi stand and the U.S. and British stands on the memorandum of understanding concerning the implementation of Resolution 986, which allows Baghdad to sell \$1 billion worth of oil every 90 days to meet urgent humanitarian needs in Iraq. Western sources have confirmed the U.S. and British rejection of the draft "memorandum of understanding" accepted by Iraq and dated 10 April, while Iraqi sources confirmed Baghdad's rejection of the version containing U.S. and British amendments, dated 22 April. However, the two sides have decided not to close the door completely to a possible change in their stands, while pointing out that the possibility of reconciling them is limited.

Robert Pelletreau, U.S. [assistant secretary] of state for Middle Eastern affairs, [stressed] that Iraq has to be "sincere" in its desire to fully implement Resolution 986. He pointed to "the possibility of an agreement being reached soon (in the New York negotiations). If that is achieved, Iraq — under the terms of the resolution — will be able to sell \$1 billion worth of oil every three months to purchase humanitarian and medical supplies."

The UN General Secretariat and the Iraqi Government delegation opened the fourth round of "oil-for-food" negotiations in New York on Monday evening [6 May]. A principal session was scheduled to be held yesterday evening.

UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali said on Monday evening that an agreement with Iraq should involve UN observation of the distribution of food, medicine, and medical equipment in the three northern governorates of Iraq, in addition to recognition of Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Resolution 986 allocated \$130-150 million from oil revenues for the Kurds in north Iraq. The Iraqi delegation did not object to the allocation of this sum to the Kurds. It objected to U.S. and British amendments to the draft memorandum of understanding, designed to deny the Iraqi Government a direct role in the Kurdish areas in north Iraq.

The Western sources believe that most of the amendments are "not fundamental," while the Iraqi sources

agreed that some of the amendments are not fundamental as regards the relationship with the north and the relationship with the Security Council sanctions committee. The sources said that the amendments give the committee — as the United States and Britain have powers similar to the veto in the Security Council — the authority to determine the points of entry for the commodities and to take charge of the process of pumping the oil, purchasing the supplies, and distributing the revenues.

The Iraqi side stresses that it is proceeding from the memorandum of understanding dated 10 April. The Iraqi sources pointed out that this "does not mean that we are definitely [qat'an] insisting on what we agreed upon before" in the draft. They went on to say that the Iraqi side is willing to give and take within the framework of "clarifying" questions, especially the fundamental ones.

The Western sources also said that the Western side is willing to give and take within the framework of "clarification." However, they insisted on U.S. and British rejection of "ambiguous" versions that arouse "our suspicions" that Baghdad intends to exploit them later for unacceptable political objectives. They went on to say: "If these amendments are arousing that number of problems for the Iraqis, that makes us more worried" about Baghdad's intentions. The sources pointed out that, if a radical change is introduced to the U.S. and British amendments, the U.S. and British willingness to ratify the memorandum of understanding will not be guaranteed.

Meanwhile, a feeling of pessimism and skepticism over the U.S. intention is prevalent among French circles acquainted with the negotiations between Iraq and the United Nations. The sources said that French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette's talks with Madeleine Albright, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, in Paris about a week ago showed that the United States will block within the Security Council any agreement on a partial lifting of the embargo imposed on Iraq, while France and Russia will throw in their weight to achieve that [partial lifting of the embargo].

Other French sources added that France is using its influence to remove any obstacles to Iraq's acceptance of Resolution 986, and that Butrus-Ghali is making moves in this direction, but his moves are restricted by the issue of his reelection as UN secretary general.

In Cairo, and for the first time since the Gulf crisis, Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa held talks yesterday with Riyadh al-Qaysi, under secretary at the Iraqi Foreign Ministry, who has been sent by President Saddam Husayn to Egypt, China, and Germany to brief those countries on developments in the negotiations between Baghdad and the United Nations.

Al-Qaysi conveyed to Musa the Iraqi leadership's request that Egypt, in its capacity as a Security Council member, intervene in connection with the introduction of amendments by the United States and Britain to the memorandum of understanding reached on 10 April.

Musa stressed to al-Qaysi that the Egyptian stand is clear, namely that it is important to implement Resolution 986 in a manner that does not conflict with Iraqi sovereignty. An Egyptian source has said that the method of handling the implementation of the resolution "has gone beyond what is reasonable." The source urged the international community "to deal with the Iraqi people's suffering more objectively." The source said: "All Arab states and peoples are pained by this suffering, which efforts should be made to end or alleviate."

Iraq: Ba'th Official Reportedly Injured in Attack 15 Apr

JN0705132896 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1215 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A heroic Islamic resistance group opened fire on criminal Jabbar Laftah al-Sa'idi, secretary of a Ba'th Party group in Baghdad, on 15 April. Our sources said that the criminal was seriously injured in the attack and that two mercenaries who were with him in the car that came under our mujahidin's fire were killed.

The sources added that the regime instituted a maximum alert within its security ranks when it learned of the jihad operation. The party and security commands summoned their cadres to their headquarters to protect them from the mujahidin attacks. It should be recalled that criminal Jabbar Laftah is instrumental in the oppression campaign against our people in Baghdad.

Iraq: Government Forces Shell Kurdish Areas

NC0705155096 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] As part of their barbaric attacks on the populated areas, the Iraqi regime's forces in the Qarah Hinjarah area last night shelled the areas surrounding the village of (Turuh) with their heavy artillery. No damage was caused by the shelling.

Iraq: Kurdish Source—U.S. Mediation in Kurdistan Failed

NC0705145396 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 28 Apr 96 p 9

[Unattributed report datelined AL-AHRAM office, London]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] An Iraqi Kurdish source in London revealed yesterday that the U.S. mediation team that visited the Kurdish area in northern Iraq last week failed to end the disputes between the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and that the two parties' stands remain far apart.

The source, which asked to remain anonymous, told AL-AHRAM that the U.S. delegation led by Robert Deutsch, head of north Arab Gulf affairs at the State Department, wanted to convince the two sides to agree to a practical plan for implementing the agreement they signed last year in Ireland. He added that the talks were held with KDP leader Mas'ud Barzani and PUK leader Jalal Talabani to prepare for the two parties' withdrawal from the territories they occupy as a prelude for an agreement on a mechanism for reforming the regional government and parliament.

The source noted that two main obstacles prevented an agreement: the lack of necessary financial resources and the absence of guarantees that the concluded agreements will be respected. It noted that past bitter experiences confirmed that agreements become useless if there is no commitment or a specific mechanism to supervise their implementation and point the finger at the party that violates them.

It went on to say that the U.S. delegation's visit could be regarded as a symbolic one. It showed once again that the U.S. Administration is still interested in finding a peaceful solution to the disputes in the Kurdish area following reports that it had abandoned this commitment because of the two Kurdish parties' refusal to reach a compromise.

The Kurdish source ruled out an announcement on a new agreement during the next stage. But he also ruled out an escalation in the differences between the two parties. He said that the state of no peace no war that has prevailed in the area for some months after the ferocious fighting will probably continue. [passage omitted]

Iraq: Saddam Addresses al-Anbar Group on 'Treason'

JN0805072396 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1830 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 7 May (INA)—President Saddam Husayn today received tribal

chieftains and clergymen of the al-Anbar Governorate. His excellency delivered an important speech in which he dealt with many issues experienced by Iraq, including the falls of stumblers and the difficult circumstances during which men should remain steadfast. He also discussed why some commit treason even if they are from his excellency's family.

A number of clergymen and chieftains delivered speeches in the presence of his excellency, reiterating the love, allegiance, and faithfulness of the al-Anbar citizens and all the Iraqi people, as well as their rally as faithful soldiers under his banner who will redeem his excellency with their own lives.

President Saddam Husayn said that the enemies of the great messages may sometimes come from people very close to him. This, however, is not the fault of the message itself but of those who weakened and could not continue the march. Therefore, the beginning is different from the end and the picture changes. You might see people at the beginning, but you might not see them at the end. You also might not see people at the beginning, but see them at the end as swords, spears, and high banners.

This is the status of confrontation in terms of faith. It is a test for hearts, minds, wisdom, and belief. We cannot say it is an easy confrontation because if we say so we will belittle the rights of the steadfast heroes. It is a difficult confrontation; in fact, it is difficult in all its aspects and entails a great amount of hardship. Therefore, the stance of believers will be on the level of this victorious march and we will see them all in their best picture, God willing.

President Saddam Husayn added: You are aware that one of those who was very close to us — a blood relation — sold out some time ago. Compared to the treason of this person, the treason of others may appear much less serious. However, treason is a deviation from the line of loyalty, faithfulness, and belief. There are no degrees of treason. Once a person deviates, all forms of treason are the same. For the sake of argument, however, let us assume that there are standards by which we judge the extent of damage done by treason. In this case, we can say that the damage done by this person to the march was much greater than that caused by many people who had sold out before him or who probably will sell out later. But has the treason of this person degraded his family? He hurt them psychologically in the short interval between his departure and return. He hurt his family a great deal. I understand what happened. This is not to say that I had expected this to happen. I understand why people sell out. I know that weak people face great difficulties. Sometimes, it is not enough for

a weak person to say that he is tired. So this person tries not to show that he is tired. Also, the ambition of this person may create some affliction under difficult conditions. Thus, this person may imagine that his ambition is close to fulfillment when he joins the ranks of evil enemies. Whenever we encounter a particular case, we go back to history. When we remember the great meanings in our history and the immortal and great Islamic traditions, the burden of any such case will be eased.

President Saddam Husayn added: This case happened inside the family. However, it did not defile the knight-hood of knights because they eventually purged themselves of disgrace by removing the bad finger. The hand remained sound, honorable, and capable of carrying a sword to defend the homeland. Great meanings also remained. Disgrace was removed. However, if his family did nothing about it, then others would have been right to stone them. But had his family consulted me, I would have prevented them because when I pardon someone, I mean it. They justified what they did by saying: If the president wants to throw us in jail, then we are prepared for this. The president issued an official pardon, and he may do so because he represents the state. However, we as a family sent him a cable and told him that we sanctioned shedding his [Husayn Kamil's] blood. Since we are capable of removing disgrace, then why don't we do it?

His excellency added that evil is present everywhere because good is spread everywhere. Because we are believers, we are aware of the noble meanings that are there. We are also aware that evil has existed since the conflict between Cain and Abel. Good is basic for construction; it is like the foundation of a building. Whenever there is good, there is evil to resist it. Therefore, we are aware that weak ones might emerge. One of them may deviate, another may fumble and fall down, a third may falter but then lift himself up and hold out when someone encourages and backs him up and tells him: Go on, brother, only a little more is left before the target is reached. We are aware of all that.

We meet here to remember those glorious days in al-Anbar history when al-Anbar youth and the good ones and notables of al-Anbar chose to support their homeland and took a memorable stand. We are meeting today on the basis of that stand. As for evil, it backfires on its doers as individuals and not families—individuals regardless of their number whether they are 10, 20, 30, 40, 100, or more or less.

President Saddam Husayn said: We appreciate those youth who turned out without being asked to salute Saddam Husayn—not for the sake of his height, shape,

or anything else, but for the sake of his position. They wanted to tell him: O Saddam Husayn, go on and we are with you against the evildoers and hostile ones. We thank you because you did not bow your head. Otherwise, all our heads would have bowed.

We came to celebrate this position as taken by the youth—the position that strengthened the determination of the whole of Iraq because it showed the Iraqis one of the pictures of their brothers and sons, which was also shown by the people of Karbala', for example, who were also hurt by the evil and weak elements.

Al-Anbar's people wanted to tell the Iraqis: Do not ever think that life is linked to those who deviate from the right path. We are your brothers; look at us, al-Anbar people, we all came out without being asked and no one told us that Saddam Husayn was coming. We turned out spontaneously as soon as we heard that he came to say that this is the picture of Iraq in the conscience of the free Iraqis. The overwhelming majority of the Iraqis are free, smart, and always faithful and honest, God willing, because good metal never changes.

The president added: Why is evil sometimes forced to manifest itself in the known manner? I explained this and said the reason is because good and sublime values have spread around and can be found everywhere. They have spread beyond the limits that evil can sustain. Therefore, evil explodes and commits suicide. You will see how evil commits suicide time after time, and how its symbol are destroyed one after the other while your values will continue to have the upper hand and will be the ones that will cross to safe shores.

We reached our destination a long time ago. This and the crossing takes place, first of all, within ourselves. We have reached our destination and achieved the crossing within ourselves. I do not mean that only Saddam Husayn has achieved this; I mean all good Iraqis have achieved this. As long as we are determined to abide by what is right and to proceed along the sound path, then we have succeeded in crossing. What remains is just a matter of time as the crossing takes place from within ourselves. As long as we are convinced that God supports us, and that God is mightier and more powerful than all, then no matter how many superpowers there are, God's power remains capable of depriving them of their values at any moment.

President Saddam Husayn said: Our banners and swords cannot be mixed up. Each banner has its dimensions and each sword has its own markings. People, too, have

their own characteristics. Those who err will be named as such. We will say this one has erred and this one has deviated. However, God has left the door wide open for the sinners to repent when they admit they have erred and abandon the wrong course.

Some of your brothers here reviewed part of your history. Through this review, you now know about the Islamic message and about those who harshly treated the Prophet, may God's peace and blessings be upon him. The harshest attacks and the best support came from those who were closest to him, starting with Imam 'Ali, may God's peace and blessings be upon him. The harshest attacks also came from Quraysh. God did not discriminate in his judgments. He did not say that for the sake of the Prophet, who is his beloved one and to please him, evildoers should be checked although God does not need to please anyone. All creatures, particularly human beings and with the prophets at their head, are called upon to please God.

Concluding his speech, President Saddam Husayn said: I respect all people because all people in this world have sublime values as God has created man in the best of forms and endowed him with the best of meanings. In view of your country's deep-rooted civilization, history, and sublime values, Iraq now defends entire mankind. You now defend entire mankind and not only Iraq. You are now defending your values and those of your forefathers.

Iraq: Transport Official Meets Dutch Business Delegation

JN0705164796 Baghdad INA in English
1350 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baghdad, May 7, INA—Iraqi Transport and Communications Under Secretary Mr. Sabri Kati' met here today with the delegation of the Dutch companies group specialized in the field of seaports works. The delegation is led by Mr. Nikolai van [name as received].

During the meeting, means of developing bilateral cooperation and the contribution of the Dutch companies in improving the Iraqi ports were discussed.

Mr. Nikolai van expressed the readiness of the Dutch companies to work in the field of exchanging technical expertise and developing the staff specialized in the water transport.

**Israel: Hamas Leader Reportedly To Be Released;
Peres Issues Denial**

TA0705185496 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television
Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 7 May 96

[Imanu'el Rosen video report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] This evening, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres accepted a recommendation by the heads of the defense establishment to release Shaykh Ahmad Yasin from prison. Senior political sources say that the shaykh will be released, but only after the elections. The heads of the defense establishment told the prime minister that Shaykh Yasin's release could prevent Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] terror attacks. Our correspondent Imanu'el Rosen reports:

[Begin Rosen recording] Eight years after he was arrested, the day of the release of Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, the man dubbed the Khomeyni of the territories and Hamas' founder, is drawing near. The defense establishment held several discussions on this issue over the past several days; one of them was attended by Shim'on Peres, prime minister and defense minister. Most of the heads of the defense establishment are currently recommending that Peres release the shaykh, citing four major reasons: A recent report on his deteriorating health; the belief that his preaching against terror will reduce the potential of suicide terror attacks; the release would support 'Arafat's struggle against terror; and the serious fear that the shaykh's death in prison might lead to grave consequences. [end recording] [passage omitted]

[At the end of the newscast, the narrator adds: "Ms. 'Aliza Goren, the prime minister's media adviser, said this evening that the prime minister did not accept a recommendation to release Yasin and that no decision has been made to free him. Our political correspondent Imanu'el Rosen notes, however, that two other senior Peres aides and two persons who have attended discussions of the inner cabinet confirmed the report."]

Israel: Baraq 'Warned' UN Against Terming Qana Incident Deliberate

TA0705191696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1900 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq this evening warned the UN secretary general that if it accuses Israel of deliberately firing at the UN post in the Lebanese village of Qana, it will harm Israel's relations with the UN force in south Lebanon. Minister Baraq spoke on the phone with Secretary General Butrus-Ghali and said that the claim that Israel had attacked the UN base in Qana deliberately is absurd.

Our correspondent Beni Avni reports that the UN secretary general said that he is aware of the impact the UN report on the affair might have on the peace process, adding that the UN's conclusions will be published tomorrow.

The commander of the Artillery Corps will meet the UN investigating officer again this evening.

**Israel: Dromi Notes Israel's 'Regret' Over
'Absurd' UN Report**

NC0805090096 Paris AFP in English
0847 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jerusalem, May 8 (AFP)—Israel on Wednesday [8 May] assailed a UN report alleging that the Israeli army had deliberately shelled a refugee-packed peacekeeping camp in Lebanon, calling it a return to the "old days" when the world body systematically used to attack the Jewish state.

"This reminds us of the old days when any libel against Israel could get the stamp of approval from the United Nations," said government spokesman Uri Dromi after release of a UN report blaming Israel for the April 18 shelling of a peacekeeping compound at Qana, Lebanon, where 102 civilians were killed. "We thought we were past these kinds of things," Dromi told AFP.

UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali, in issuing the report in New York, said that "while the possibility cannot be ruled out completely, the pattern of impact in the Qana area makes it unlikely that the shelling of the United Nations compound was the result of technical and/or procedural errors" as argued by the Israeli army.

"We really regret the fact that they came up with this kind of report," Dromi said. He said Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq had telephoned Butrus-Ghali to protest release of the report containing "absurd" charges that Israel would have knowingly attacked a UN compound crammed with civilians.

"As Baraq told Butrus-Ghali, this will be damaging to relations between Israel and the United Nations and between the Israeli army and UNIFIL [UN Interim Forces in Lebanon]," Dromi said, referring to the UN peacekeeping force in Lebanon.

Ovadia Soffler [spelling as received], a member of Israel's delegation to the United Nations in the 1970s who has written extensively on Israeli-UN relations, said the Qana report "is an echo of the situation before the peace process."

"The UN has been used as a vehicle by the Arab states for putting pressure on Israel and this kind of thing is a stumbling block to the peace process," he said.

Israel: Shahaq on Terror Warnings, Qana Incident, Lebanon Pullout

TA0705155596 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1405 GMT 7 May 96

[Report by Yo'el Nir]

[FBIS Translated Text] Speaking wryly at the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Lieutenant General Amnon Shahaq, chief of staff, was very precise: There are frequent and constant warnings of possible terror attacks, but they are general and not specific, he said. According to him, these warnings are the main reason why Palestinian laborers may not come to work in Israel. He described the cooperation with the Palestinian Authority's security apparatus, again wry and precise, with the word — fine.

The next issue addressed was Lebanon. A senior Intelligence Branch officer told the committee that he can neither deny nor confirm reports that Iran has recently given Hizballah katyushas with a 34 or 36 km range. So far, Hizballah has katyushas with a 22 km range. Extending the range will allow Hizballah more freedom to operate. The chief of staff, indeed, said that although Hizballah is busy with damage control, it may be examining options of attacks against Israel.

The senior officer added that after Operation Grapes of Wrath, Iran sent Hizballah three more shipments of katyushas via Damascus, and possibly another shipment by sea that probably included other weapons.

Answering a question by Meretz Knesset Member [MK] No'omi Hazan, Shahaq said that he does not recommend that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] pull out of the security zone under the current security circumstances. Regarding the UN story of a drone that allegedly filmed Qana before the bloody incident, the chief of staff said: There was a drone in the air, but it was not watching

the UN compound. Only after the IDF learned that there were civilian casualties was it sent to film the site.

Another issue on the committee's agenda: The letter of understandings with the U.S. secretary of state was placed on the committee members' tables. MK Beni Begin asked: How could the government surrender Israel's defense by putting it in the hands of the United States? His question remained unanswered. After all, it is election time.

Israel: 3 Arab Protesters Wounded by IDF Fire in Qalqilyah

TA0705163296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English
1400 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In the Qalqilyah area, three Palestinians were lightly wounded when IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers fired rubber bullets to disperse about a dozen demonstrators protesting against land confiscations to build a security fence. The protesters threw stones at bulldozers and soldiers in the area.

Israel: PA's International Phone Lines Cut

TA0705183196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1800 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Bezeq, the national telephone company, disconnected the Palestinian Autonomy's [PA] international lines this afternoon, due to a debt of some 30 million shekels. The Bezeq Company told our correspondent Dan Bielsky that to this day, it has not received a down payment of some 5 million shekels that the Palestinians pledged to pay some two weeks ago. A check for 683,000 shekels that the Palestinians gave Bezeq for the delivery of equipment and maintenance work the company did for the Ramallah relay station bounced as well.

Jordan: 2 Iraqis Arrested After Visiting Israeli Embassy

NC0705150396 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jordanian authorities arrested two Iraqi nationals as they were walking out of the Israeli Embassy in Amman last week.

Official sources in Amman have disclosed that the security agencies had been surveying the two Iraqi citizens' movements and their contacts with the Israeli Embassy. A preliminary investigation showed that one of them is an engineer in the Iraqi Military Industrial Authority and the other is a member of the Republican Guard.

The Jordanian authorities are trying to learn the reasons why the two Iraqis visited the Israeli Embassy and what information they had relayed. The official sources did not reveal whether the concerned Jordanian authorities have informed the Iraqi regime's Embassy in Amman about what had happened. They also did not say if the two Iraqis would be returned to Baghdad.

The sources said, however, that they expect the two Iraqi citizens to use their wish to seek asylum in Israel as a pretext to hide their real intentions and the Iraqi regime's connection with this matter.

Jordan: Court Sets 19 May Trial Date for 13 Accused of 'Subversion'

JN0705140496 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 7 May 96 p 3

[Report by Rana al-Husayni, "Special to the JORDAN TIMES"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Seven attorneys defending 13 people accused of subversion Monday [6 May] asked the court to speed up the trial of their defendants which began last September, to "insure justice for their clients."

Attorney Muhammad Hantush, speaking on behalf of the other six defence lawyers, also informed the court that the Jordan Bar Association-appointed attorneys met with their clients and are preparing their defence statements.

The defendants, known by their group affiliation names as Bay'at Al Imam (pledge of allegiance), are charged with slander against His Majesty King Husayn and illegal possession and manufacture of explosive materials.

For the past nine months, the group's trial has been postponed indefinitely because the defendants would not cooperate with their appointed lawyers and had disrupted several court sessions.

Some of the defendants, who were repeatedly expelled from the courtroom, had rejected the appointment of attorneys charging that they did not believe in the court's justice system.

In other development in the case, Presiding Judge Hafiz Amin set free six of the 13 defendants before the holiday of 'Id al-Adha, after the attorneys requested that their clients be released on bail.

The six defendants, freed before the 'Id are accused only of slandering King Husayn. They are: Nabil Muhammad Abu-Hafiah, Sharif Ibrahim 'Abd-al-Fattah, Ahmad 'Abdallah Yusuf, Muhammad 'Abd-al-Karim Ahmad, Muhammad Fakhri Musa and 'Ala-al-Din 'Atif Sa'dat.

The attorneys also asked the court to give them time to present their defence statements. Judge Amin agreed to the defence's request and set May 19 as the date to resume the case.

Meanwhile, the Court of Cassation recently approved a request by the State Security prosecutor general to split the trial of two Jordanians involved in an attack on a French diplomat in February 1995.

According to the higher court, Salim 'Abdallah Jaradat and Ahmad al-Qassim, both 22, will stand trial at the Criminal Court on charges of the attempted murder of French envoy Gil Hein in February 1995 in Wadi al-Mujib.

At the same time, the suspects will be tried at the State Security Court on sabotage charges.

The defendants' attorney, Salih al-'Armuti, had asked the State Security Court that his clients be tried on charges of both sabotage and attempted murder in either the State Security Court or the Criminal Court but not in separate courts on separate charges as is being actuated by the state prosecutor.

State Security prosecutor general Muhammad 'Ubaydat, on the other hand, demanded that the case be tried in two separate courts stating that attempted murder charge was not within his court's jurisdiction.

Judge Amin set May 13 to start hearing the case. No date was set by the Criminal Court to start hearing the case of attempted murder.

Jordan: Al-Mu'ashshir on Air Exercises With U.S., Iraq

JN0705083696 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic
7 May 96 p 11

[Report by Nivin 'Abd-al-Hadi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman — Information Minister Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir said His Majesty King Husayn will pay an official visit to Cairo this week at the invitation of Egyptian President Husni Mubarak. He added that the meeting will be a bilateral one between his majesty and President Mubarak.

Al-Mu'ashshir said this at his weekly meeting with the press, which was held at the Marriott Hotel yesterday. He said that Crown Prince Hasan's visit to al-Ruwayshid yesterday had no political connotations. He said the visit was for the purpose of inspecting gas drilling sites and not for inspecting the Iraqi-Jordanian border. Everyone knows that al-Rishah gas plants are in that area.

On the presence of U.S. planes in Jordan and the air sorties over southern Iraq, the minister said: Recent rumors indicate that Jordan asked that U.S. planes overfly southern Iraq. Of course, these rumors are baseless. Jordan asked that these planes be sent to Jordan only to train Jordanian pilots.

Al-Mu'ashshir added: With respect to the training on U.S. planes, we now have two types of operations being conducted simultaneously. The first is codenamed Eagle Tiger. It consists of training operations between Jordan and the United States, and has absolutely nothing to do with the issue of the planes overflying southern Iraq. This training exercise is taking place between 4 to 10 May and comprises air-to-air and air-to-surface exercises. There are also air sorties to train Jordanian pilots. These exercises are not confined to just Jordanian-U.S. sorties but also include training operations, modernization of the airport, and maintenance work.

With respect to the sorties over Iraq, they are currently taking place and will continue until the end of June. No Jordanian pilots will participate in them. There will be no Jordanian participation in any air sortie outside Jordanian borders.

On the U.S. forces participating in these maneuver, al-Mu'ashshir said: There are 1,100 personnel consisting of technicians and pilots who live in tents set up for the maneuvers. These tents will be removed when the training exercises end. No U.S. planes will stay in Jordan. We are now negotiating with the U.S. Administration to keep some of the equipment to avoid having to purchase them in the future. So far, nothing has been finalized in this regard.

Al-Mu'ashshir added that there are no U.S. air bases in Jordan. He said it is Jordan's firm policy not to accept the presence of fixed or mobile air bases. He said all the forces will leave when the maneuvers end on 30 June.

Our receiving U.S. aircraft next year requires airport modernization. This entails several aspects, such as modernizing runways and maintenance equipment. We seriously need maintenance equipment. We would like to keep some of the equipment brought to Jordan for the maneuvers.

Answering a question on the Jordanian policy toward Iraq and the return of the Jordanian ambassador to Baghdad, Dr. al-Mu'ashshir said: The Jordanian ambassador came to Amman for consultations. He provided the Jordanian Government with information that we are following up now. It is not true that he will stay in Amman, and as far as I know, he will return to Baghdad within the next few days to resume his duties there. There is not any substantial change in the Jordanian policy toward Iraq. [Jordanian Ambassador to Iraq Bassam] Qaqish provided the government with information about the Jordanian students who were killed in Iraq. We are following up on that issue with the Iraqi Government.

Dr. al-Mu'ashshir denied that there is a radio or television transmission of the Iraqi opposition from Amman. He said Jordanian laws do not allow radio and television transmissions for any parties other than the Jordanian Radio and Television Corporation. Therefore, no other party, whether it is Iraqi or of any other nationality, can transmit from Jordan.

As for the Iraqi opposition's request to publish a magazine called THE FUTURE IRAQ [Iraq al-mustaqbal], the minister said no such request has been submitted to the Information Ministry. He also said only Jordanian citizens have the right to apply for a newspaper license.

Meanwhile, Dr. al-Mu'ashshir said the Jordanian Government has no intention to reduce the size of the Sudanese diplomatic mission because this mission is already small. He said this position is not a violation of the recent Security Council resolution on reducing the size of Sudanese diplomatic missions all over the world because there is no need for a reduction in Jordan.

On the recent Jordanian talks with the European troika delegation, Dr. al-Mu'ashshir said: The talks were good. We thanked the EC for its support of Jordan and we demanded a greater EC role in the peace process. The delegation expressed a strong desire to play such a role, especially since the EC economic role in developing the region is very strong.

The EC informed us of its decision to provide Jordan with a grant, not a loan, of \$130 million to help Jordan implement the economic reform program and to assist the balance of payments. This grant will be paid through installments over one year.

Al-Mu'ashshir added: The partnership agreement with the EC will permit us to request aid from them. The EC allocated \$1 billion in aid to the region. This sum will be disbursed over a period of five years.

He said: We in Jordan now enjoy a very convenient situation in terms of the conditions set by the EC to extend the required aid. We are very optimistic about this agreement which will open up new European markets for Jordanian agricultural produce.

Regarding the Jordanian position on the refugee issue, Dr. al-Mu'ashshir said: The Jordanian position on this issue is very clear and is documented in the Jordanian-Israeli treaty. This issue coincides with Jordan's discussions with the Palestinians on the final-status negotiations in a bilateral manner or according to the manner Jordan deems appropriate, naturally with regard to the Jordanian refugees and not as an overall political issue of refugees.

He added: There is also the multilateral working group which will discuss the refugee issue. This group will meet in Amman between 12 to 14 May to finalize the discussions on its topics.

Discussing the general economic concerns in Jordan, al-Mu'ashshir said: There is not an economic crisis in Jordan, but there is a bad economic situation. As I said before, we in Jordan need time to feel the results of foreign investments which came to Jordan and the tangible improvement in the economic situation. We do not want to deceive anyone by saying that there are no economic problems. In fact, short-term economic challenges face this country.

He added: However, this does not mean that these challenges represent a crisis. Perhaps, they only mean that the current situation will improve tangibly after some time. We will begin to feel the results of what we have achieved so in terms of investments in tourism and in the water sector. These investments include dams which will be built in the near future and the partnership agreement with the EC states which is expected to be finalized within the next two months. This agreement will open the way for many Jordanian commodities, particularly agricultural produce, to compete with European commodities.

He said: The future investment projects in Jordan include the airport which will be built between al-'Aqabah and Elat in the south, the growing tourist

industry, increasing foreign investments, and many other investment projects which have begun to surface. He also pointed out the country's growing revenues in foreign currency.

Nevertheless, we have to be frank with the citizens, and we should not promise them a substantial economic improvement within one, two, or three months.

On the hike in water and electricity prices, the minister said: Any price hike does not come from a vacuum. Water is a difficult problem in Jordan; there is not enough water in the country. Therefore, the difficult decision to increase the current water prices was essential in order not to deceive the citizens. If the price of water were not increased this year we would find ourselves facing an acute water shortage and then we would be forced to increase water prices by tenfold. Of course, we do not want to reach that point.

We increased water prices to force those who consume huge quantities of water to reduce their consumption. This will not influence the low-income class, thus, 66 percent of consumers who represent this class will not be affected by the price hike. After this increase, only the operation and maintenance costs will be covered. The rate of water loss is 55 percent per year, and renewing the water network requires millions of dinars. So from where can we acquire these funds? Increasing water prices will secure about 20-23 million dinars. This does not mean that we are not renewing the water network, but there is an annual plan within the budget to change parts of the network. However, developing a new network to save water requires more than one billion dinars.

The industrial sector will bear the largest part of this increase. Therefore, there will be an indirect hike in prices of the products of factories although the operational cost will not increase substantially. These increases will be no more than 2 percent, which is not a high rate.

On exploitation of artesian wells, Dr. al-Mu'ashshir said the government will soon discuss encroachment on lands and water wells on the national level. The discussions will not be about encroachments by specific persons or encroachments in certain areas. The discussions are intended to stop these violations, especially regarding unlicensed wells.

On the electricity price hike, the minister said: As for electricity, several foreign companies want to invest in the electricity sector, such as the Qatari gas project, shale oil project, etc. For the investment to be feasible, the electricity should cover its cost because it is difficult to invest in an unfeasible sector.

Dr. al-Mu'ashshir added that the hike will cover the cost of electricity. This is because foreign investment in the electricity sector could total more than \$1 billion. This will result in great economic benefits. However, the imbalance in the electricity sector must be corrected first.

Dr. al-Mu'ashshir said: We have taken into consideration poor classes. The cost will increase by 30 piasters the bill for 88 percent of electricity consumers. This is not a big increase. However, it is necessary.

Asked whether raising the prices of water and electricity was upon the request of the World Bank, Dr. al-Mu'ashshir said: Jordan is now implementing a reform program. We should know that this is a national program approved by the World Bank. The World Bank did not ask us to raise the prices of anything. However, we cannot ask for loans if we do not comply with certain criteria.

The question here: Will the situation remain unchanged? The answer: Of course not. There are many plans to address this situation. These plans were outlined in the policy statement. There are good signs regarding the volume of investments for this year, which is 70 percent more than what it was last year. Passing new laws has

helped attract foreign capital. This is Jordan's way out of the crisis now. We receive no aid, as we used to in the past. We are passing through a difficult transitional stage. Everyone should bear with us until this situation, which will not last long, ends.

Answering a question on the Jordanian Government's position on the Turkish-Israeli military agreement, Dr. al-Mu'ashshir said: The agreement has been exaggerated. Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa visited Turkey and learned about the details of the agreement. Egypt no longer has reservations about the agreement.

Dr. al-Mu'ashshir confirmed that the Sri Lankan honorary consul has not been released on bail. The interrogation is over and the consul will be put on trial this week.

Speaking about the new Internet service, the information minister said: It is a new experience. We allowed it in Jordan so that citizens may ask the government any questions via this service because it is difficult to meet with them. It is still a limited service and the number of subscribers is not great. We hope all newspapers will use the Internet. This will be a good channel to ask the government any questions.

**Lebanon: Buwayz Meets U.S., French Envoys,
Views Monitoring Group**

NC0705125996 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
1115 GMT 7 May 96

[Report by correspondent Jinan Kharrat at the Foreign Ministry]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said he handed the U.S. and French ambassadors the identical Lebanese-Syrian paper [as heard] on forming the monitoring committee. He said he had asked Lebanon's Ambassador in Washington Dr. Riyad Tabbarah to attend the meeting to be held on 10 May to discuss the monitoring committee's mechanism and program of action. Buwayz added that the Lebanese paper has its own features [as heard] and has taken the U.S. and French proposals into account. He said the Washington meeting will give shape to the ideas on forming the monitoring committee. Minister Buwayz said:

[Begin Buwayz recording] I handed the paper to the U.S. and French ambassadors. Our ambassador in Washington has already received it. He was asked to attend the 10 May meeting in Washington, which will discuss the monitoring committee's mechanism and program of action on the basis of the papers to be presented. Tabbarah was given the necessary information and instructions so that he and the other parties might reach a unified concept that guarantees the effectiveness of this committee. This is what is needed on the security level. This committee cannot be a political one or an alternative to the peace process and its mechanism or an alternative to the Resolution 425 mechanism. We believe the solution to the problem of the Israeli occupation of Lebanese territory lies primarily in the implementation of Resolution 425 and through the peace process if the need arises. Hence [words indistinct] that conflicts with this situation. We do not want any new mechanism to be turned into an alternative to this stand. This committee is required to be a monitoring one, a committee that points out those responsible for violating the understanding, a [words indistinct] committee that meets in the field, a committee that does not exceed this understanding toward political or nonpolitical objectives, a committee that expresses the proposed phased security solution, and nothing else. [end recording] [passage omitted]

**Lebanon: Egyptian Assembly Speaker Arrives,
Condemns 'Massacres'**

NC0705163396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
1530 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Egyptian People's Assembly Speaker Dr. Ahmad Fathi Surur and his accompanying delegation arrived in Beirut this afternoon. During the three-day visit Dr. Surur will meet with President al-Hirawi, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, Prime Minister al-Hariri, and visit the south. Speaker Birri received his Egyptian counterpart at the airport. [passage omitted]

Speaking upon arrival, Dr. Surur said:

[Begin Surur recording] [passage omitted] The Egyptian people strongly condemned and continue to condemn the treacherous Israeli aggression against Lebanon, because peace can never be attained by beating the drums of wars, committing aggressions against defenseless civilians, or hitting and murdering civilians. The massacres that took place in Lebanon, and which continue to take place in other areas, will leave wounds that can never heal. Those who call for peace must close and remedy these wounds, not cause further ones. [passage omitted] [end recording]

**Lebanon: Egypt's Birri Denies Secret 'Annex' to
Cease-Fire Understanding**

NC0705182996 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
1530 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri strongly denied any secret annex to the April understanding. He added that neither the United States nor any of the other states concerned with the understanding has the right to insist on or impose a certain document. Speaker Birri pointed out that the April understanding was the best deal possible under the circumstances. It was not possible to secure a better deal, he added, under the pressure that existed at the time.

Birri's remarks were quoted by Editors Doyen Chief Milhim Karam. Birri added that Israel's recent aggression against Lebanon had sought to empty Southern Lebanon of its inhabitants, but noting that national unity played an important role in preventing this and that the biggest credit goes to the French stance, which forced others to act earlier than they initially anticipated.

Speaker Birri noted that he had called on and urged the UN secretary general to publish the report on the Qana massacre. He asked: Why has the report not been published? He stressed that the massacres Israel committed backfired against it. When Israel could no

longer keep it up, the aggression came to a stop, he noted. He emphasized that the massacres were deliberate and that he has evidence to prove it.

Speaker Birri noted that the monitoring committee must be a field committee stationed on Lebanese territories, as well as on the other side. It must receive complaints but not turn into a permanent solution, he added.

Birri pointed out that the recent experience was the first opportunity after the al-Ta'if Accord to prove to everybody that we have a state. He stressed that the government lived up to its responsibility, particularly in the first few days of the aggression. He praised the role of the media, which did half the job of serving the cause, he added.

Lebanon: Buwayz Demands Publication of UN Report on Qana

NC0705133696 *Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic*
1300 GMT 7 May 96

[News Conference by Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz with unidentified correspondents in Beirut on 7 May — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Buwayz] The United States has called for a meeting on 10 May. Each party will be represented by the envoy it chooses. We have chosen our ambassador in Washington to represent the Lebanese state and Syria has chosen its ambassador in Washington to represent it. France might, for example, be represented by someone other than its ambassador, and the United States might be represented by Dennis Ross, the peace process coordinator.

[Correspondent] Regarding the UN report on Qana, what is Lebanon expecting from this report? Do you think that there was a delay in issuing it?

[Buwayz] We expect the United Nations to restore, strengthen, and prove its credibility and to show the necessary boldness by publishing this report, which clearly states that Israel was responsible and denies the possibility of an error. We believe that there is no need for UN reports and investigations if it does not have enough courage to publish these investigations so that the international public can read their contents.

Lebanon: Hizballah Official Says Qana Deaths Intentional

NC0705191896 *Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic* 1730 GMT 7 May 96

[Telephone interview with 'Ammar al-Musawi, member of Hizballah's Political Bureau, in Lebanon, by Mahdi

Hasan, in Tehran; from the "News and Reports" program; date not given — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Hasan] Mr. al-Musawi, Zionist artillery commander Dan Har'el has alleged that the Qana massacre was an error committed by the Zionist forces because their maps were not accurate. This is what Zionist circles claim. Har'el alleged that the massacre was unintentional. What do think of this excuse?

[Al-Musawi] Our view on this matter is clear, of course: The massacre perpetrated by the Zionist enemy in Qana was premeditated. The enemy leaders wanted to strike a greater degree of fear into the hearts of the civilian population, citizens who were steadfastly remaining on their land. I wish to remind listeners that after a massacre occurred at al-Nabatiyah, Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres was asked to comment. He replied with the utmost impudence: Are there any civilians left in al-Nabatiyah?

We must bear in mind that under normal circumstances al-Nabatiyah has more than 150,000 inhabitants. To put it briefly, the massacre was premeditated. If we examine the initial statements made by enemy leaders and army commanders about the massacre, we will find contradictions among the views expressed by Shim'on Peres, Ehud Barak, Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq, and other officials. Their contradictory statements reveal that the massacre was planned but that the enemy leaders were confused about how to explain it to the world. At any rate, the report made by a UN investigating commission shows that the Zionists were largely responsible for the massacre. Despite U.S. and Zionist pressure on the United Nations to make its officials tone down their accusations of the enemy leaders, the report contains several very clear things.

The enemy claims he possesses very sophisticated weapons and that his smart bombs never make a mistake but can very accurately select military targets, even if they lie in the midst of civilian neighborhoods. This Israeli announcement refutes any other claim regarding the likelihood of an unintentional error.

[Hasan] Mr. al-Musawi, certain observers and analysts say that Shim'on Peres took revenge on the Lebanese people because they rallied around Hizballah's Islamic Resistance before and during the Zionist aggression against Lebanon — and because he, Peres, failed to drive a wedge between the Lebanese people and the resistance. What do you think?

[Al-Musawi] This view is certainly correct. I can add the following: The massacre was carried out in the context of satisfying the Zionist wish for vengeance and to

see blood flowing on the other side. This vengefulness has long been part of the Zionist mentality — namely, gloating over bloodshed and the torn bodies of other people. When the enemy failed, in striking against the resistance and Hizballah's mujahidin, he directed his gunfire against civilians. Also, by committing these massacres perhaps the enemy was trying to arouse Lebanese public opinion against Hizballah and make the Lebanese people believe that Hizballah's resistance operations were the cause of these massacres. We are confident, however, that these massacres have made the Lebanese people rally more strongly around the resistance. Now there is greater public demand for the mujahidin to continue directing their gunfire against the Zionist terrorists.

[Hasan] Mr. al-Musawi, thank you.

[Al-Musawi] You are welcome.

**Lebanon: Nasrallah—Israel Failed To Meet
'Aggression' Objectives**

NC0805062696 *Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic*
0515 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah Secretary General Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah says he believes Israel failed

to isolate Lebanon and failed to separate the Resistance from the people or the Lebanese track from the Syrian track.

In the martyrdom and victory festival celebrating the souls of the martyrs of steadfastness and resistance who fell during the recent Israeli aggression, Nasrallah stressed that resistance will continue until liberation. He mocked claims that Israel's target was simply to destroy the Hizballah structure. He pointed to the massacres that took place and the destruction of civilian institutions.

The Hizballah festival, which took place yesterday in Harat Hurayk, was attended by deputies, political personalities, and party delegations, including a Phalangist party delegation headed by Karim Paqradi, deputy head of the Phalangist party, with Antoine Shadir, Antoine Ghanim, Pierre Karam, and Mr. Khuri as delegation members.

Syria: Al-Shar' Receives Iranian Envoy, Velayati Message

JN0705204396 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2015 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' received Kazem Khansari, director of the Middle East and North Africa Department in the Iranian Foreign Ministry, today. Iranian Ambassador Hasan Akhtari also attended the meeting. Khansari delivered a message to the foreign minister from Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati.

Discussions at the meeting dealt with the results of the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and the aid that Iran can extend to the Lebanese Government to help reconstruct what was destroyed by the Israeli shelling of Lebanese villages and cities.

Syria: Iranian Envoy, al-Shar' Discuss Lebanon

LD0805113496 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The head of the headquarters for the coordination of the Islamic Republic of Iran's assistance to Lebanon today met with the Syrian foreign minister in Damascus.

The central news unit reports from Damascus that Hojjat ol-Eslam Khansari conveyed a verbal message from our country's foreign minister to his Syrian counterpart and referred to the Zionist regime's aim of inflicting heavy damage on Lebanon. He said: On the basis of its principled policy, the Islamic Republic of Iran will always stand alongside the people and the government of Lebanon.

The Syrian foreign minister praised the Islamic Republic of Iran's decisive efforts during the Zionist regime's offensive against Lebanon. He said that the measures had shown who the true protectors of Lebanon were.

Mr. Khansari is visiting Damascus en route to Lebanon.

Another report says that Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah, secretary general of the Hizballah revolutionary movement and Nabih Birri, speaker of the Lebanese parliament and secretary general of the Amal Movement met with the Iranian ambassador to Lebanon in Beirut last night.

The consequences of the Zionist regime's offensive and the situation in Lebanon in the aftermath of the cease-fire were discussed.

Syria: AL-BA'TH Calls For Trying Israelis for Qana Massacre

JN0705133696 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0720 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 7 May (SANA)—AL-BA'TH says: The United Nations holds Israel responsible for the Qana massacre and emphasizes that the Israelis deliberately shelled the UN forces position where the massacre took place, so the international organization should also have a part in trying those responsible for the Qana massacre as war criminals and first-degree terrorists.

In an analysis today, the newspaper says: Applying a double standard in dealing among states is unacceptable. Just as the Serbian criminals, and the Nazi criminals before them, were tried for collective massacres, the Israeli officials should be tried for the Qana massacre, which is the same type of crime as that for which the other criminal butchers were tried.

AL-BA'TH notes the U.S. attempt to cover up the matter and portray it as something that can be ignored. It says the United States is trying to defend its pro-Israel policy and its open support for the Israeli aggression against Lebanon.

The newspaper says the massacre committed by U.S. soldiers at My Lai in Vietnam was what turned the American people against that war.

AL-BA'TH adds: U.S. President Bill Clinton is famous for leading or participating in demonstrations that denounced the My Lai massacre and demanded that the perpetrators be tried as war criminals. How can President Clinton explain his position on the Qana massacre, given the fact that he rose to fame after condemning the U.S. Army massacre in Vietnam?

AL-BA'TH concludes: Shim'on Peres has officially declared his responsibility for the Qana carnage, saying he issued orders that the site be bombed. Does this not mean that he has personally condemned himself and that regrets and claims about mistakes are not enough? The paper asks the international community to avenge Arab blood in Lebanon and to uphold international law. Israel must not remain above international law.

Syria: Paper Says U.S. 'Completely Biased' Toward Israel

JN0705125196 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0715 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Damascus, 7 May (SANA)—The newspaper AL-BA'TH asserts that the peace process was, and will continue to be, the strategic

option of the two fraternal countries — namely Syria and Lebanon — as part of the Madrid conference formula and based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425 and the land-for-peace principle. [passage omitted]

In its editorial, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH refers to a host of points which resulted from the recent events in the region. These points are related to the U.S. position on the situation in the region, and they question the future U.S. role in the peace process as well as the U.S. obligations in this regard in the wake of the U.S. bias toward Israel's aggression against Lebanon.

AL-THAWRAH adds that these points include the tacit U.S. blessing of Israel's aggression as well as preventing the United Nations from condemning Israel and holding it responsible for the Qana massacre. They also include promoting the U.S.-Israeli strategic alliance agreement and opening the U.S. arms arsenal to Israel, as well as the statements made by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

The paper adds: Christopher's statements cast doubt on the serious Syrian position on peace. They also basically conflict with the declared U.S. position which constantly stresses the importance of the Syrian role and emphasizes that Syria is serious about peace, which is its strategic option. This was stated by senior U.S. officials, led by President Clinton and Christopher. These points also include the attempt to turn the committee supervising the cease-fire in Lebanon into a replacement for the peace talks.

AL-THAWRAH says: These points depicted the U.S. position as one that conflicts with the U.S. role as a full and honest partner in the peace talks. Through these points, the United States seemed completely biased toward the Israeli side.

The paper criticized the U.S. position for fully approving the Israeli views and for ignoring the equality [al-tasawi] and balance [al-tawazun], which should be enjoyed by the full and honest mediator in the peace talks under U.S. sponsorship.

The paper asserts that the U.S. position is similar to the Israeli position vis-a-vis the fact that the world is unanimously holding Israel responsible for the Qana massacre. This similarity poses a real threat to the peace process and peace efforts, knowing that the United States pledged to achieve peace in accordance with its known bases on which the Madrid conference convened.

Concluding, AL-THAWRAH says: We could have viewed these points as electoral positions because Washington is in favor of Peres winning the coming Israeli elections. However, in the wake of Christopher's

recent statements, matters have gone beyond the tactics regarding the region's future and destiny. The Arabs and their causes are the target, and this requires a return to the basics of peace. Syria has always stressed its commitment to these basics.

Syria: Israel Said To Pose 'Danger' to Regional, World Security

JN0705160296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1150 GMT 7 May 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: It seems that the Israeli occupation mentality is the source of the cycle of violence and counterviolence that now constitutes one of the most important expressions of the impasse in the peace process. Despite everything we heard about Israel's concern about peace during various propaganda events, the facts show that the Israeli concept of peace is dangerous. In accordance with this concept, the Israeli peace becomes a tool to impose hegemony, not a means to end aggression, entrench security, and achieve stability in the most important and most dangerous region in the world. Agreements are partial and solutions are incomplete to make it easier to devour Arab rights, maintain all or some of the occupation, and impose hegemony through economic projects that enable Israel to use the region's resources for its new projects.

When Israel fails to achieve this, it launches aggressions to kill, destroy, burn, and perpetrate massacres, such as the one during its recent aggression against Lebanon. This massacre put Israel's friends, supporters, and those who try to cover up Israeli crimes in an unenviable position — particularly the U.S. cosponsor, which found itself a party to the aggression, not a partner in peace, and followed the idiotic Israeli military campaign with a campaign to polish the image of Shim'on Peres, the killer of children, and provide him with military and political aid.

It is as if the rule is that Israel must be rewarded. This logic will be in a critical situation if Washington wants to restore its role as a partner in the peace process, something that necessitates it to do many things to prove that it is honest and fair and that it does not see only through Israel's eyes. It should also relinquish its double standard.

Israel views peace based only on its parochial, selfish interests, which are characterized by aggression and occupation. Support for this Israeli view endangers the peace process, which cannot achieve its objectives of a just and comprehensive peace, security, and stability without Israel relinquishing the spirit of aggression and

announcing its readiness to fully withdraw from the occupied Golan and southern Lebanon.

The tension, disturbances, fighting, violence, and counterviolence are the result of the Israeli occupation. The elimination of these factors will guarantee the realization of peace, security, and stability. Anything short of this is an attempt to play with words and a flight of fancy that should end, taking into consideration that, through their past and present aggressions, the Israeli officials have reaped nothing but disappointment. We reiterate the need to work for the elimination of Israeli aggression and the removal of all causes of tension, which is necessary for a just and comprehensive peace based on the UN Security Council resolutions, the principle of land-for-peace, and the establishment of parallel [mutawaziyah] and even [muta'adilah] arrangements that guarantee security for all sides and bring stability to the region.

What was reached was a necessary agreement to end the bloodbath. However, the peace process should move toward its objectives, in accordance with its principles. The understanding is not an alternative to a just and comprehensive solution that restores land and rights to the people. It has become dangerous to ignore the facts of the conflict in the region and to disregard the facts of peace. Israel, which has no conscience or covenant and has no respect for world public opinion and the international legitimacy, now poses danger to the security of the region and the world. Its arrogance must be ended. This is one of the basic responsibilities of the international community, which should do something to save its own legitimacy, not the Israeli law of the jungle. This is the only way out of the impasse in the peace process.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: BNP Leader Comments on Controversy Over Defense Ministry

BK0705122396 Dhaka DAINIK ITTEFAQ in Bengali
21 Apr 96 p 1 and 2

[ITTEFAQ Report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar, secretary general of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party [BNP], has said that the charge of the Defense Ministry has been handed over to the president, who is an elected person, as it is a sensitive ministry. The charge of the Defense Ministry has been handed over in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution 13th amendment.

In a regular press briefing yesterday, the secretary general said that he wanted to address those who claim handing over the charge of the Defense Ministry to the president is inconsistent with a parliamentary form of government: I want to tell them that neither is a caretaker government consistent with a parliamentary form of government, because those who have taken over the charge of this government are not elected persons. He said the prestige of the Bangladesh Armed Forces has not been hurt nor dishonored by handing over the charge of the Defense Ministry to the president. Barrister Salam Talukdar said that there is no scope to hand over the Defense Ministry to the chief adviser even if demands are raised.

When asked about politicization, he said this has only recently been heard. The BNP secretary general added that what can be greater politicization than the acts of those who violated all rules and regulations and imposed a one-party rule, and even made the then Army chief a member of this party [referring to Awami League government of 1975, which imposed a one-party rule]. We regret not being able to resort to the type of politicization that was done by them. It would have been good if we could have done so, but we could not do so because we support a democratic system. He said that four or five government officials had violated the rules and the provisions of the Constitution by issuing statements from a political platform and added that the BNP will demand action against them from the authorities.

Commenting on the demand raised by the Jatiya Party to release Ershad [party chairman and former president], the BNP secretary general said that the erstwhile caretaker government of Justice Shahabuddin arrested Ershad at that time in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the law. He faced a trial in court and an appeal has been filed. The court will give its

judgment in accordance with the provisions of law. In this regard, the BNP secretary general referred to the comments made by Dr. Kamal Hossain, leader of the Gano Forum, who said that it is not desirable to make any accused person an election issue.

Referring to a newspaper report that said the attorney general withdrew his resignation after being influenced by the BNP, the BNP secretary general said the attorney general is not a member of his party. Neither I, in my capacity as the secretary general of the party, nor any other party leader had talks with him. Turning to the demand of the BNP to hold elections by 31 May, Barrister Salam Talukdar said that the opposition parties earlier said that they want elections by May. We are also ready for elections in May. There cannot be any particular motive behind this demand, but we cannot start a fight if the elections are held in June. He said: What is the motive of those who are taking the elections to the month of June? [passage omitted]

Bangladesh: Top Civil Servants Suspended for Political 'Meddling'

BK0805080696 Hong Kong AFP in English
0630 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DHAKA, May 8 (AFP) — Bangladesh's High Court has suspended eight top civil servants for 10 days for allegedly meddling in politics, court officials said Wednesday [8 May].

Syed Ahmed, principal secretary to caretaker chief Muhammad Habibur Rahman, and eight other senior officials were suspended by judges A.M. Mahmudur Rahman and Mohammad Fazlul Hoque for ten days from Tuesday, the court officials said.

Ahmed and the eight deputy commissioners are accused of "violating government rules" and "involvement in political activities," and will be required to attend a hearing on May 14 to answer the charges.

Bangladeshi civil servants are not allowed to dabble in politics. Court officials gave no details of their alleged political involvement.

In a separate order, the judges also gave the government one week to explain why disciplinary action should not be started against all those named.

The order was triggered by a writ brought by Asaduzzaman Ripon, editor of a little known weekly, "Janata Dak," through lawyer Khandaker Mahbubuddin Ahmed, reportedly a member of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

A government comment was not immediately available.

The writ comes amid hectic political activities for the June 12 parliamentary elections and its implications were not immediately clear.

Ripon charged that the eight, who on March 28 revolted along with 27 other top bureaucrats against former prime minister Khaleda Zia's BNP government, had by their action "grossly violated" government rules.

Analysts said the revolt precipitated Zia to resign March 30 and hand over power to Rahman's caretaker government, ending two years of opposition efforts to oust Zia, saying it was impossible to hold "free and fair" elections while she remained in power.

Since then the BNP has been demanding that those who revolted be punished, especially those who joined the "People's Dais" group of the then opposition Awami League, led by Sheikh Hasina Wajed.

They also pledged their support to the league's "non-cooperation campaign" which included public sector strikes.

The civil servants, in a petition on March 28, asked President Abdur Rahman Biswas to form a caretaker government as "the administration, law and order situation and the economy has collapsed. The country was now confronted with a serious crisis."

They refused to work, citing security concerns, but denied their actions were political, saying they were merely those of "servants of the state."

Along with Ahmed, others named in the case are Foreign Secretary Faruk Sobhan and Planning Commission Member Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir.

Also named are eight district administrative chiefs, recently posted under a widespread administrative reshuffle opposed by the BNP to act as returning officers during the general elections.

The duties of Ahmed, who is Rahman's right hand man, include assisting him in his official duties, while deputy commissioners work as chief executives in a district and act as returning officers during elections.

India

India: Election-Related Violence Reported From Bihar, Manipur

BK0705131996 *Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 7 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Initial reports say that an estimated 45 to 50 percent voters exercised their franchise in today's polling to 183 Lok Sabha and 154 West Bengal assembly seats. Barring stray incidents, the polling was, by and large, peaceful.

In Bihar, the second and final phase of elections for 34 out of 54 Lok Sabha constituencies was marked by incidents of violence, snatching of ballot papers, and ballot boxes. The state home commissioner, Mr. D.P. Maheshwari, told AIR Ranchi correspondent that at least four persons were killed and 12 others injured in poll-related violence today. About 45 to 50 percent polling has been reported in today's poll. Mr. Maheshwari said that one subinspector of police and a truck driver were killed in a landmine explosion while five others were injured at Bachhwara police station in Hazaribagh District. In another incident in Gaya District, a miscreant was killed in police firing when he was trying to flee with a ballot box. In Jamui, a person died following a group clash. More than 200 persons were taken into custody. According to the state election office, the election was canceled in at least 150 polling booths in various constituencies following incidents of snatching of ballot papers and ballot boxes.

In Manipur, unknown miscreants armed with sophisticated weapons exploded bombs and destroyed polling material at nine polling stations in the Inner Manipur constituency.

In Uttar Pradesh, polling was reportedly suspended in Nawabganj segment of Phoolpur constituency when some miscreants threw ballot boxes into a pond following a clash between the supporters of two rival candidates.

In Jammu and Kashmir, moderate to heavy polling has been reported from the two Lok Sabha constituencies of Jammu and Ladakh where polling was held today. No untoward incident has been reported from anywhere and polling passed off peacefully.

Reports of incident-free polling have also been received from Nagaland. In other states, the polling has been reported moderate to heavy.

Candidates in about 350 Lok Sabha and 750 assembly constituencies will get to know what is in store for them in the ballot boxes when the counting starts tomorrow. The Election Commission has given the green signal for counting in most of those constituencies which went to the polls in the first and second phases. Counting in the rest of the constituencies will be taken up on Thursday.

The Supreme Court has dismissed two petitions seeking a direction to the Election Commission to withhold declaration of results of the Lok Sabha election till polling is completed in Jammu and Kashmir. A three-judge bench while dismissing the petition filed by the Jammu and Kashmir Panthers Party observed that courts should decline to interfere with the electoral process once it is initiated.

India: Further on Voting; Pakistanis Shoot Into Kashmir Areas

*BK0705153996 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 1430 GMT 7 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Initial reports say that an estimated 45 to 50 percent voters exercised their franchise in today's elections to 183 Lok Sabha and 154 West Bengal assembly seats.

In Bihar, the second and final phase of elections for 34 out of 54 Lok Sabha constituencies was marked by incidents of violence, snatching of ballot papers and ballot boxes. About 45 to 50 percent voting has been reported in today's polls. At least nine persons were killed and 12 others injured in separate incidents of violence in Central and South Bihar. Four policemen, including a sub-inspector of police, were killed in two different incidents of landmine explosions in Hazaribagh and Palamau Districts. Nine security personnel were seriously injured in the incident. In separate incidents, three extremists were killed in police encounter in Palamau District while one each was killed in Gaya and Jamui Districts. The election was canceled in at least 200 polling booths in various constituencies following incidents of snatching of ballot papers, ballot boxes, and other irregularities. More than 190 persons were taken into custody in connection with different incidents.

In West Bengal, preliminary information says 65 to 70 percent voters cast their franchise on the second and final phase of elections today. Polling in 22 parliamentary and 154 assembly constituencies passed off more or less peacefully barring some stray incidents. AIR Calcutta correspondent reports that brisk polling is reported almost from all the districts where elections were held.

The polling in the two Lok Sabha seats in Tripura went off, by and large, peacefully today. According to the Tripura chief electoral officer, 65 percent polling was recorded in the state.

A moderate turnout of 55 to 60 percent of voting and stray incidents of violence marked the polling in two Lok Sabha constituencies in Manipur. Polling was peaceful in the hills, but it was marked by sporadic violent incidents in the valley areas where suspected militants hurled bombs and snatched ballot papers.

Reports of incident-free polling has been received from Nagaland.

In Madhya Pradesh, over 50 percent voters today exercised their franchise in the second and final phase of polling in 20 parliamentary constituencies. The turnout of voters on an average remained moderate.

In Jammu and Kashmir, Jammu constituency had about 55 percent polling while Ladakh recorded over 75 percent poll. The state chief secretary, Mr. Ashok Kumar, told a press conference in Jammu this evening that polling was incident-free. In Ladakh constituency, the smallest polling station of Damchowl witnessed 100 percent polling as all its nine voters exercised their franchise. Our Jammu correspondent reports that people in large numbers turned up to exercise their franchise in Rajauri and Punch Districts ignoring the militants call for boycott of the polling.

Pakistanis resorted to firing at 27 places near the Line of Control in Punch District, but there was no damage or casualty. Polling stations of these villages had already been to safer locations away from the range of Pakistani firing. Pakistan had been making election boycott appeal over loud speakers from across the border, but most of the polling stations in the border belt reported high poll percentage.

India: Vote Counting Begins; Trends 'Likely' by Evening

*BK0805033796 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 0245 GMT 8 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Counting of votes for 353 Lok Sabha and 762 assembly seats began at 0800 [0230 GMT] this morning. Elections for these seats were held in the first and second phases on the 27th of April and the 2d of this month. The counting of votes in Muzaffarpur Lok Sabha constituency in Bihar has been withheld following reports of rigging. The election commissioner, Mr. G.V.G. Krishnamurthy, told newsmen yesterday that the commission has made elaborate arrangements for the counting.

In the capital, counting will take place in 10 centers for the seven Lok Sabha seats. Counting of votes for the 41 Lok Sabha seats in Andhra Pradesh will begin at 290 centers, and the first trends are likely to be available in the evening. In Karnataka, tight security arrangements have been made in 50 counting centers set up for the 27 Lok Sabha constituencies.

In Assam, counting of votes will be taken up simultaneously for 122 assembly seats and 14 Lok Sabha seats at 65 counting centers all over the state. In Pondicherry, counting will begin this morning in four centers located in the geographically separated regions of Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe, and Yanam. Counting will be done simultaneously, both for the assembly seats and the lone parliamentary seat. The trends from Tamil Nadu are expected to start from the afternoon. The Uttar Pradesh Government has banned victory processions after the declaration of election results.

India: First 3 Phases of Elections Termed 'by and Large Peaceful'

BK0805035996 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 0245 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Fifty to 60 percent voters cast their votes in the third phase of polling yesterday for 183 Lok Sabha seats in 12 states and 154 assembly seats in West Bengal. The polling was marred by incidents of violence in Bihar, where 19 people were reportedly killed in mine explosions, bomb blasts, and armed clashes involving extremist groups. An Uttar Pradesh Government spokesman last night claimed that the reported death of one person at Mainpuri was not related to polls. He said that the polling in Mainpuri constituency of the state was peaceful.

The Election Commission has termed the first three phases of polling for the Lok Sabha and assembly constituencies across the country as by and large peaceful.

The election commissioner, Mr. G.V.G. Krishnamurthy, told newsmen yesterday that the turnout of voters in Jammu and Ladakh constituencies was very impressive despite continuous firing by Pakistani forces from across the border. About 55 percent polling was registered in Jammu, while voters turnout in Ladakh was as high as 80 percent. Elections are being held in Jammu and Kashmir for the first time in seven years. The election commissioner, Dr. M.S. Gill, said that positive indications are available in the state after the first phase of polling there yesterday. He said elections for the 11th Lok Sabha has clearly demonstrated that the people in the country have faith in the democratic system despite several problems.

India: Delhi Voices 'Full Commitment' To Hold Kashmir Elections

BK0805034296 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 0035 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India has voiced its full commitment to hold a free and fair poll in Jammu and Kashmir despite Pakistan's desperate bid to thwart the democratic process. An External Affairs Ministry spokesman said the public opinion in Kashmir has seen through Pakistan's designs. It has also turned against its mercenaries trained and armed by Islamabad to disrupt normal life and the political process in the state by indulging in violence and terrorism.

India: Rival Party Leaders Claim Election Victory

BK0805071696 Hong Kong AFP in English
0701 GMT 8 May 96

[Report by M.R. Narayan Swamy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] NEW DELHI, May 8 (AFP) — Hindu nationalists on Wednesday [8 May] vowed to form a government after an exit poll gave them the most seats in a likely hung parliament, but the ruling Congress (I) party claimed it will retain power.

Bharatiya Janata Party (Indian People's Party) spokesman K.R. Malkani said the BJP would head India's "first honest coalition government" with the backing of regional groups if it finished first in the general elections.

He made the assertion as officials began counting hundreds of millions of votes from the staggered election which ended Tuesday and after an exit poll on state-run television put the BJP on top of a fractured parliament.

Malkani said the BJP would be invited by President Shankar Dayal Sharma to form the government if it emerged with allies as the single largest bloc in the 545-seat Lok Sabha, the lower house.

"We will ask for a few days to put together a government," Malkani told AFP. "And then come out with a minimum common programme and negotiate sharing of power with regional parties."

An exit poll late Tuesday said the BJP and its allies would win 192 seats, followed by the Congress of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao with 142.

It projected 134 seats for a centrist-leftist alliance and gave the rest to smaller parties. The final election outcome would be known by Friday, after two days of non-stop vote counting.

The Congress, which is India's oldest party and has ruled the world's largest democracy since independence in 1947 barring two brief spells, insisted, however, that it would retain power.

"I still hold that the Congress will scrape through," party spokesman Vithal Gadgil told AFP from his home in Pune, near Bombay. "It will get a majority or near-majority and will form the government."

Gadgil, a confidant of Premier Rao, said the BJP would not receive enough legislative support to take power. "It will have to ask the others' support. If necessary, all other parties will come together to keep the BJP out."

Former prime minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh, a leader of the centrist-leftist coalition, also said the BJP

would fail to put together a government even if it won the most seats in the Lok Sabha.

"All the other parties will get together to defeat the BJP in this scenario of a hung parliament," said Singh. "That is their one-point agenda."

India's dominant communist party echoed Singh's sentiments.

"A lot of (political) activity has begun since polling ended," said Sitaram Yechury of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). "We believe the people's verdict is against both the Congress and BJP."

"In such a state I suspect the overwhelming majority (of other parties) will go with the third (centrist-leftist) front," he said.

Yechury, whose party leaders are in touch with disgruntled Congress politicians, said a section of the ruling party could split and join with the centre-left coalition known as the National Front-Left Front.

The BJP's Malkani said any non-BJP government would collapse.

"The whole thing would collapse within months," he said. "And we will have elections again within a year... They are all a very unstable and unshaky lot. Everyone knows it."

The rival claims came as thousands of Election Commission officials began the mammoth exercise of counting the votes from 347 constituencies at 8:00 a.m. (0230 GMT). Counting elsewhere will start Thursday.

"(Vote counting is) going on fine and there will be a slow build-up," said Election Commissioner M.S. Gill.

He said the results would start coming in late Wednesday. "By (Thursday) morning there should be a lot of results," he said. "A clear picture would emerge by late evening or night."

"The polling has very, very largely been peaceful," he added. "In a big country some incidents will obviously be there. But considering the size of the country, we have had a good and peaceful poll."

Nearly 600 million voters were eligible to cast their ballots in polling spread over three days.

More than 80 deaths were reported in election-related violence with more than half of them occurring in the eastern state of Bihar, where 18 people died during Tuesday's final round of voting.

India: Congress, Janata Dal Leaders Comment on Coalition

*BK0705160696 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 1530 GMT 7 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Indian National Congress says the party's working committee will decide whether or not to take support of secular forces in forming the next government in the event of a hung parliament. But, the party has firmly ruled out any truck with the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]. The party leader, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, said the Congress never had any adjustment or coalition with the BJP though other parties took its support in the past.

The Janata Dal says it is having talks with other political groups on the new government to be formed after the election results are out. The party spokesman, Mr. Jaipal Reddy, told newsmen in New Delhi today that the Janata Dal will not have any truck with the Indian National Congress headed by Mr. Narasimha Rao. He said Mr. V.P. Singh had a meeting with the Tamil Maanila Congress leader, Mr. P. Chidambaram, to exchange notes on the current political situation. He said the Janata Dal will welcome the left parties joining the government at the center in case the third front comes to power.

India: Editorial Criticizes Rao's 'Utter Apathy' Toward Kashmir

*BK0805055496 Delhi THE PIONEER in English
7 May 96 p 10*

[Editorial: "A Token Visit"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] It comes as no surprise that the Prime Minister, Mr P V Narasimha Rao, chose to end his election campaign with a symbolic visit to the State of Jammu & Kashmir [J&K]. Nor does it shock anybody that only a thin crowd gathered to listen to him. Tokenism has severe limitations and Mr Rao should have realised this before undertaking a visit to Jammu. A Prime Minister who could find time for the beleaguered State only a few days before his term was drawing to a close is obviously not very serious in his approach. Or else, he would have gone to the Kashmir valley too in order to lend greater credibility and better profile to the election process currently on there. Such a visit was also imperative to lessen the sense of alienation from the rest of the country which a sizeable section of the people have started nursing during the past decade or so. However, in his wisdom, Mr Rao opted for visiting the Hindu-dominated Jammu while ignoring the Muslim-majority Valley. The fact that even his Jammu visit evoked a feeble response shows that the Prime

Minister's belated display of concern has failed to cut much ice with the electorate there.

In view of the utter apathy shown towards the State by Mr Rao's regime, it could not have been otherwise. For years together, Mr Rao allowed the quarrel between the Union Home Minister, Mr SB Chavan, and his junior Minister, Mr Rajesh Pilot, to grow, leading to a situation when the two had started working at cross purposes. The J&K governor, Gen. (Retd) KV Krishna Rao, had his own ideas about the best way to restore normalcy in the terrorism-stricken State. This state of affairs naturally spread confusion and nobody knew what the Government planned to do to put the State back on the rails. The creation of a Kashmir cell in the PMO [Prime Minister's Office] failed to make much difference and the drift continued. Time and again, the Rao Government has displayed its lack of initiative and foresight as was evident in the Charar-i-Sharif fiasco. The release of Mr Yasin Malik and Mr Shabir Shah was never followed up with action to strengthen those elements who were in favour of the State returning to democratic rule.

Even though holding of the Lok Sabha elections in J&K is a positive development — candidates in good numbers have filed their nominations — there is a danger that the gains from these polls will also be frittered away, turning this into yet another lost opportunity. Had Mr Rao spared as much time for J&K as he devoted to his various trips to Tirupati and other centres of pilgrimage, the Kashmir story would have been certainly very different. However, even in his handling of the Kashmir affairs, the Prime Minister seemed to adopt his no-action-is-best-action policy, often complicating the scenario even further. Now on the eve of elections, he has paid a visit to J&K to seek votes for his party, not to offer anything which can help the State return to normalcy. Merely holding elections is no guarantee that the State will be able to exorcise the ghosts of terrorism and separatism.

India: Editorial Regrets U.S. Action on Intellectual Property

BK0805063096 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES
in English 7 May 96 p 11

[Editorial: "Correct But Unwise"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The US decision that it would soon initiate action against India at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) court for failing to fulfil obligations under the Trade-Related Intellectual Properties (TRIPS) agreement is regrettable. Ms Charlene Bershefsky, acting US Trade Representative, held out the threat in annual reports on Special 301 and trade law provisions

aimed at protecting US copyrights, patents and other intellectual property. Specifically, India has been accused of failing to provide patent protection for pharmaceutical or agricultural chemical products. The American move is unfortunate, although it cannot be blamed technically. Washington is fully aware that the patent law had become a highly controversial issue in India. There was a widespread perception that the Rao Government had accepted the WTO obligations under US pressure and by compromising the interests of the Indian pharmaceutical industry. In spite of that, Mr Rao had initiated legislative action. The Bill was passed in the Lower House where his party enjoyed a majority. But it floundered in the Rajya Sabha, as the Congress does not have a majority there.

If the Rao Government was suspected to have exploited the parliamentary disadvantage to explain away its inability to meet the TRIPS obligations, its action could not be described as unusual. The Congress Government was gearing up to face a general election. It was naturally keen to avoid creating an impression that it acted under outside pressure. Equally naturally, the Opposition parties, which might otherwise be amenable to reason, were determined to make political capital out of Mr Rao's problems. What was needed from the US was more understanding of the compulsions of pre-election India. Such an attitude alone would make it possible to bring about a positive consensus among the widest political spectrum in this country on the national obligations under the WTO. The US action may be flawless, but not wise. And, it certainly was timed to convey a message which Washington may not have intended. Ms Bershefsky has not won more Indian confidence; she may have lost a measure of goodwill for the US.

India: CTBT, Nuclear Policy Called 'Mess'

BK0805065096 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 7 May 96 p 10

[Article by Praful Bidawi: "CTBT & Weapons Option — Nuclear Policy in a Mess"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Contrary to the assertion that there exists a strong consensus on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) issue, and more generally, on nuclear policy, there is evidence of cleavages and differences, both of substance and nuance. Actual conduct, as well as most official statements on India's nuclear position, suggests that New Delhi regards the nuclear weapons option as vital to security.

However, the foreign secretary's March 21 statement at the Conference on Disarmament [CD] is at odds with this. Mr Salman Haidar said: "We do not believe that the

acquisition of nuclear weapons is essential for national security... We, therefore, seek their complete elimination. These are fundamental precepts" for India's "foreign and national security policy." Mr Pranab Mukherjee in December strongly denied that India has or had plans to conduct a nuclear explosion. But on March 8, he told a select audience in New Delhi that "we were planning" to conduct a test late last year, but "something happened, we may do that later".

The incoherence extends to the CTBT issue too. Many have argued that the CTBT being negotiated is an iniquitous or ineffective treaty, and against India's interest. Few, however, are prepared to take this to its logical conclusion, viz. that India should scupper the negotiations by exercising its veto power, which like all CD members it possesses. They at best cite 'non suequitor' or "tactical" reasons for not doing so.

Most of the current arguments against the CTBT are mistaken. Broadly, these fall into three categories. First, the CTBT today, unlike in 1954 or even in 1993 when India cosponsored a motion with the US urging a CTBT, without mentioning nuclear disarmament will be unequal and discriminatory, and aimed at horizontal, rather than vertical, proliferation. Second, the nuclear weapons-states (NWSs), in particular the Western ones, are so technologically advanced that they don't need to test. And third, detection of clandestine tests by the NWSs will be virtually impossible under the verification system proposed.

Specious Argument

These arguments are specious. A CTBT was always conceived as a capping measure. It still remains valid and valuable as one, even though it won't produce disarmament. It will be more effective against vertical than horizontal proliferation. Without tests involving a yield of nuclear energy, no qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons is possible. However, a basic fission bomb capability can be acquired without testing.

A CTBT will lead to slowing and cessation of the nuclear arms race. In its absence the NWSs especially the US, could develop of new weapon systems, including "third generation" nuclear-triggered laser and directed energy weapons, microwave weapons, mini-or micro-nukes, and "fourth generation" weapons such as solid hydrogen and anti-protons. It cannot be in India's interest to allow this vertical proliferation.

Turbulent System

Second, laboratory tests can never replace explosive testing. Computers cannot tell designers what they don't already know. Unless data generated from hydronuclear

tests or full-fledged explosions is fed into them, they cannot produce inputs for weapons design. Nuclear explosions are nonlinear, coupled and extremely turbulent systems using materials under ultra-high densities and pressures. Computer codes are therefore only approximations to reality. Parameters fed into them have to be adjusted for each type of calculation. There are no universal parameters. Weapon codes need continual updating with data from real tests. "Ironically, the more the tests, the more questionable the codes become... until they have been recalibrated against nuclear tests."

The NWSs, then, cannot develop or refine weapons with computer codes alone. Nor are hydrodynamic tests (which involve studying implosion assemblies without fissile material) a substitute. At the very least, HNEs [hydronuclear explosions] are necessary for that. But the most widely accepted definition of a CTBT's scope bans HNEs.

Third, small deep-underground explosions are liable to be detected. The verification agenda being negotiated in Geneva involves an international monitoring system on which there is broad agreement. This will use four technologies: seismic, hydroacoustic, infra-sound and radionuclide. Detectors will be set up at least sites. Radionuclide sensors are extremely sensitive. It will be extremely difficult to cheat on the CTBT or evade detection. At any rate, this is an argument for tighter, more intrusive verification, which India has been opposing in Geneva.

Will the CTBT lead to an elimination of India's weapons option? Whatever the US's stated objectives, and however questionable, the CTBT is not an effective means of achieving them. It will not commit India to degrading, leave alone rolling back, its capability, any more than it would compel the US to do so. If anything, it will strengthen the momentum towards genuine nuclear disarmament, especially if followed up by a fissile materials ban (fissban), and no-first-use treaty. Fissban is already on the CD's agenda. What can India do if it does not sign a CTBT which is completed this year? Barring sabotaging it, there are only three options: waiting; second, testing but not going openly nuclear; and third, declaring India to be an NWS and building a large first-and second-generation arsenal. Waiting while the rest of the world, including perhaps Pakistan, has signed, will isolate India, bring the US and Pakistan closer, and lead to an adverse shift in the conventional security balance in South Asia. It will yield no benefit to offset the cost, which will rise as fissban talks proceed. This is a passive non policy.

Take testing. Carrying out just one test is of symbolic importance. It won't help develop boosted fission

weapons or miniaturise existing designs. Multiple tests will only bring odium, and guarantees a loss in India's global stature. They only make sense if New Delhi embarks on full oven nuclearisation. The second option thus logically leads to the third. The third option will make India a nuclear leper state which opposes the only progress towards nuclear disarmament the world has seen in a long time. The only conceivable rationalisation for overt nuclearisation is that India must get equal with China. This make little sense: India has learnt to live with a nuclear China since 1964, and Chinese missiles are known not to target India. An effective deterrent against China will mean the investment of tens of thousands of crores in fissile materials, bombs, missiles and a control and command infrastructure — an unconceivable cost.

Nuclear Rivalry

More important by joining the 'China League', India will have engendered nuclear rivalry not just with China, but with the US and Russia. That makes nonsense of "minimal deterrence" and any halfway rational notion of security. It is a prescription for disaster.

This is not to argue that India should play a passive role at Geneva and blindly sign any treaty that comes along. On the contrary, it should try to secure a bona fide zero-yield treaty with tough verification, and a preambular commitment to complete nuclear disarmament, such a treaty is within reach, but could slip away if the momentum is lost. A new text prepared by the test ban committee chair. Mr Jaap Ramaker, provides a good basis to speed tip the talks to early conclusion, in keeping with a UN resolution. Our policy-makers must not be swayed by blind ultra-nationalism. Such nationalism comes very cheap. Did we not recently see it in full play at Eden Gardens [reference to the riot during India's World Cup cricket loss to Sri Lanka in Calcutta on 13 March]?

India: Dixit Views Current Security Issues

BK0805072096 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English
7 May 96 p 8

[Article by J.N. Dixit: "Emerging Security Scenario — Keeping a Wary Eye"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India, totally engaged in the general election, has perhaps shut out the world at large for the last two months. Barring the repetitious cogitations in media and seminars about the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Pakistani moves on Kashmir, other developments did not appear on the radar screen of our political attention. There were, however, a number of events and resulting developments which should be a

matter of concern to us in foreign policy and national security terms.

Four events which occurred in April are of significance: President Clinton's visit to South Korea and Japan, the visit of the Prime Minister of Nepal and the President of Sri Lanka to China, the G-7 (should we call it G-8?) summit in Moscow and President Yeltsin's visit to China.

Clinton and Japanese Prime Minister Hashimoto signed a new defence/security agreement. The US encouraging a high-profile role for Japan in the Asia Pacific and ASEAN region is bound to generate negative reaction from China and an amount of apprehension from member countries of the ASEAN. The historical memories of a politically and economically strong Japan in the inter-war period, and during World War II have not faded from the collective mind of this region.

The US-Japan agreements signed on April 17 and 18, 1996, were the culmination of an exercise in creating a politico-security equilibrium which the US and Japan had initiated on the disintegration of the Soviet Union to keep Russia in line and to counterbalance China. The Sino-Russian response to this process has been an increase in interaction in the spheres of political relations and defence cooperation. Yeltsin's visit to China is a part of this process. China has imported arms worth between \$20 and 25 billion from Russia since 1990-91.

It is obvious that new kinds of competitive strategic games are now in progress affecting our whole region. These developments are bound to have an impact on the characteristics and agenda of the security arrangements being put in place by the ASEAN under the Asian Regional Forum (ARF). Chinese, American, Japanese and Australian presence in the forum is not likely to make the working of the ARF harmonious in the context of these developments.

Clinton seems to have initiated a process to replace the Russian Federation as a major player in North Asian regional equations. During his visit to South Korea and Japan, he made two proposals: the first, that a four power conference should be called with North Korea, South Korea, the US and China as participants to resolve the problems between the two Koreas. Second, he proposed that Japan should play an active role in resisting nuclear weapons proliferation in the region. With Japan's own nuclear and missile capacity technologies, the second proposal will be viewed with suspicion by the Chinese. The first proposal, which excludes Russia from being a participant in a conference dealing with the future of North Korea may raise Russian hackles. The US, Japan and to some extent China are not too

keen on India being included in the ASEAN security arrangement despite their being generally supportive of India being a full dialogue partner in the ASEAN.

The second development, of the Prime Minister of Nepal and the President of Sri Lanka visiting China, reflects the desire of the leadership of these two countries to balance their relationship with India. Both Deuba and Chandrika Kumaratunga have already visited India. Their visit to China was a logical foreign policy initiative on the part of both these leaders. While the Nepalese Prime Minister's visit was aimed at indicating to the Chinese that Nepal would continue to have a balanced interaction with both India and China, the Sri Lankan President's visit must have had the additional dimension of seeking Chinese material support for fighting the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam).

The G-8 summit in Moscow from April 19 to 22 with Russian participation resulted in decisions which would influence the orientation of the non-proliferation agenda of the nuclear weapon powers. The summit agreed on full cooperation between the countries which the leaders represented, on measures to deal with nuclear energy, radioactive waste, weapons grade material and nuclear smuggling. The G-8 leaders affirmed their commitment to give absolute priority to nuclear and missile non-proliferation. They also agreed on closer intelligence cooperation to prevent illicit trade in nuclear materials and weapons-oriented nuclear equipment. There was also a policy-level consensus that the G-8 countries should cooperate with each other in closing down potentially dangerous nuclear reactors first in the Russian Federation and Eastern Europe and then in other parts of the world.

These decisions, preceding the next round of discussions on the CTBT in the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva, are pointers to the vigour with which the nuclear weapon powers and their allies would pursue their agenda on non-proliferation matters with the international community. That the US is inclined to adopt coercive methods to further this agenda is confirmed by the fact of the US Defence Department initiating a number of steps under a non-proliferation doctrine called "Counter-proliferation Initiative". This initiative has been in existence for nearly a decade now.

There are reports that the US joint Chiefs recently undertook a review on how to deal with recalcitrant nuclear weapon capable states. They suggested to the US Defence Secretary and President Clinton that the responsibility for counter-proliferation be assigned to the US armed forces as a "military mission". More recent reports indicate that Clinton has decided to entrust the responsibilities for counter-proliferation steps to the area commanders overseas where nuclear and missile pro-

liferation threats affecting US national interests exist. Though the immediately targeted countries are North Korea, Iraq and Libya, it would not be an exaggeration to anticipate back room boys in the US military and intelligence establishments including countries like Iran and India in such a list of targeted countries.

We must also take note of bilateral developments in our immediate neighbourhood. The US is more active than before in trying to stabilise the situation in Afghanistan by mediating between the Rabbani Government on the one hand and Taleban and Pakistan on the other. The obvious motivation of US policies in Afghanistan is to ensure that Iran does not become an influential factor in structuring future arrangements in Afghanistan.

There are also reports that despite Russia being a party to various US initiatives on non-proliferation, Moscow is having discussions with Teheran for training up to 700 Iranian nuclear experts. There are indications that Russia would provide assistance to Iran to operate its nuclear power plant in Bushehr. A nuclear weapons capable Iran will be a factor affecting our defence and security policies. We have to remain alert about increasing defence cooperation between China and Myanmar [Burma]. China has exported nearly \$2.5 billion worth of military equipment to the SLORC [State Law and Order Restoration Council] regime in Myanmar. Despite denials from China and Myanmar about Chinese military naval presence in the south-eastern extremities of the Bay of Bengal, we have to remain alert about this possibility and its implications.

US-Pakistan military cooperation stands revived with Washington turning a blind eye to Sino-Pakistani cooperation in Pakistan's nuclear programmes and Pakistan's declared nuclear weapon acquisition intentions.

The emerging scenario, therefore, is of a strategic and security environment characterised by competition and ferment which impinge on India's security. Our new government, regardless of which party forms it, will have to proceed beyond the conceptual articulation of intentions regarding national defence mentioned in their pre-election manifestos. These evolving ground realities have to be met with pre-emptive promptitude.

Iran

Iran: Khamene'i, Rafsanjani Address Festival

LD0705184496 Tehran IRNA in English
1310 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 7, IRNA — "Qadir feast" or 'Id al-Adir, which marks the historic day when the leadership and 'Velayat', supreme divine jurisprudent and the rightful successor of the prophet

was declared at a place called 'Ghadir-e Khom' near the holiest place in the world, Mecca on this great day.

This historical event took place in what is known as 'Hajj-el Vedah' after Prophet mohammad (saw) [Sal Allah-o wa Sallam - God's peace be upon him] performed his last hajj. At this holy place, the prophet took the right hand of Hadhrat 'Ali (as) [alayha salam — peace be upon him], the commander of the faithful, and told the people gathered at the caravan that he is leaving behind him the holy scripture, the Koran, and the members of the household as two precious trusts, which needed to be valued and followed if they wanted redemption in this and the next world.

On this auspicious occasion of 'id al-Adir, top government officials, military brass, dignitaries and people from different walks of life had an audience with the leader of the Islamic revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, at Imam Khomeyni Hoseyniyeh (hall) Tuesday. They had come to offer their most heart-felt greetings and congratulation to the beloved leader on the occasion.

The descendent of the Holy prophet of Islam, the supreme leader of the Islamic revolution, Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, in return felicitated the audience and the Islamic ummah and oppressed people of the world, describing Qadir feast as the "feast of Velayat, politics, active participation of people in government affairs and feast of the Islamic ummah".

The prominent ayatollah said the 'Id al-Adir is a feast of paramount significance in terms of both its unique characteristic, the personal, political and social character of the commander of the faithful, Hadhrat Ali (AS), first imam and rightful successor of the prophet's (SAW) household, as a divinely man and harbinger of the important message of the Qadir event — "an induction of Velayat and Islamic government philosophy".

Ayatollah Khamene'i called the event of "Qadir" a development emerging in light of the virtues, privileges and exemplary acts of the commander of the faithful, Hadhrat 'Ali (AS), pointing that the sublime character of Hadhrat Imam 'Ali (AS) and this solitaire gem shines out providing divine guidance to humanity who could not either visualize his elevated divinely personality or profit from his precious services after the historical Ghadir-e Khom event.

"It is, of course, a great honor to be blessed with divine command which was revealed through the Holy prophet of Islam and his rightful successors. Greater is the honor for the believers who pledge their allegiance to the true divine leader (Hadhrat 'Ali (AS)). Ayatollah Khamene'i said.

The leader of Islamic revolution added that yet greater honor is the brilliant characteristics of Hadhrat 'Ali (AS) as a model of humanity deserving a divinely designation for the leadership of the Muslim ummah.

Further elaborating on this historical day, Ayatollah Khamene'i said the Velayat to which the holy prophet of Islam (SAW) designated 'Ali (AS) in Qadir was not meant only as a general spiritual guardianship, for such a Velayat is a divinely and celestial matter not being appointable or electable.

"Such a Velayat has existed in the Holy prophet of (SAW) and all infallible imams (AS) whose leadership and guidance have remained eternal despite the fact that they might not have ascended the worldly throne and attained ephemeral secular leadership," the ayatollah pointed out. He further propounded that when the Holy prophet (SAW) designated the leadership to the commander of the faithful, Hadhrat 'Ali (AS), this event signified the importance of leadership of the Muslim ummah and the trust put in the hands of hadhrat 'Ali (AS) for the just and fair administration of the affairs of the Islamic community.

Ayatollah Khamene'i pointed out that if the event of Qadir is heeded from now on, the problem of the separation of religion from politics shall be obliterated from the minds, indicating that in Islamic government and religion are indivisible.

Elsewhere in his speech, the ayatollah said in Qadir, the Holy prophet of Islam (SAW) fulfilled one of the loftiest obligations in obedience to the holy Koran pronouncing before the eyes of the people the establishment of government, Velayat and administration of country as ingredients of Islam.

The leader of the Islamic revolution stressed that the designation of supreme divine jurisprudent is a vital message of qadir and noted that the Holy prophet of Islam (SAW) as the founder of islam, communicated this message in Qadir enjoining Muslims not to divide religion from government and not isolate religion as the basis on which individual and social life is founded.

"The core of man's life is the responsibility which is shouldered by religion and that religion should administer the government", Ayatollah Khamene'i said.

He called despotic kings and their lackeys as the forerunners of the devious idea of the separation of religion from politics, pointing out that the dictators and unbridled agents serving under the former regime of Iran and in other countries were scared of ulema being involved in any form of politics.

Thereafter, imperialists and colonialists braced up the theory of the separation of religion from politics, imposing this very idea even on some ulema and religious minded people, Ayatollah Khamene'i pointed out.

The leader of the Islamic revolution described the elimination of the false notion of the separation of religion from politics as the greatest achievement in the political movement of the people of Iran. The leader added that the respectable Iranian people entered the political scene motivated by religion, hoisted the banner of freedom at call of religion and under the leadership of ulema, toppling the unrighteous regime and establishing the sovereignty of the divine rule in Iran.

"This movement indicated to the world Muslims that politics, government, Velayat and religion are indivisible", the grand ayatollah pointed out.

Leader of the Islamic revolution further noted that the "whispers heard in the guise of support for religion that religion should not be engaged in politics are the new propaganda tricks of imperialists against the sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Iran".

The ayatollah added that obviously, when those who are envious of the prosperity of an Islamic nation, would back up a devious path, and that the false philosophy of religion and politics, a deviation, as being two different entities, cannot easily be eliminated. So, they (enemies) propounded new arguments in support of the theory of separation of politics from religion, inculcating that politics are accompanied by problems and the failings would cause people to be disheartened with religion as they would view the failures from religious angle, leader of the Islamic revolution said.

Ayatollah Khamene'i added that the imperialists then inject the idea that religion should keep away from politics and that religion should take care of spiritual problems of the people.

This deviation, the leader warned, is today propagated by the agents of imperialism employing various techniques, tricks, ruse and distortions in the world, especially among the Muslims.

The ayatollah praised the late leader of the Islamic revolution, Imam Khomeyni, and pointed out that the honourable imam should be highly valued by the Islamic ummah for he acquainted the people with the responsibility of active participation of the ummah in the affairs of government.

Ayatollah Khamene'i added that in an Islamic government, committed Muslims, would adhere to Islamic beliefs and Shari'ah and consequently, they will directly

involve themselves in the affairs of government, political issues and social matters showing the depth of their involvement in decision making of the country.

Prior to the speech of the leader of the Islamic revolution, President Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani congratulated the leader on behalf of the Muslim people of Iran.

President Rafsanjani remembered the late leader of the Islamic revolution, Imam Khomeyni, and limelighted the vital and benefitting aspects of Velayat (supreme divine jurisprudent) in the making and prevalence of the Islamic sovereignty.

The president said a fair evaluation of the domestic, regional and international developments in respect to Iran and the existing unity and solidarity within the nation, shows that the Islamic Republic of Iran is rapidly and firmly moving forward under the philosophy and the axis of Velayat (supreme divine jurisprudent).

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani pointed out that "we consider these blessings to be the direct influence of the divinely event of Qadir and that today we thoroughly realize the true value of the lofty concept of Qadir and Velayat with our mind and soul".

Iran: Nuri-Shahrudi Appointed Ambassador to Saudi Arabia

LD0805102996 *Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian*
0930 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] On a proposal of Foreign Minister Velayati, and the approval of President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, Mr. Mohammad Reza Nuri-Shahrudi has been appointed as ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Saudi Arabia.

Iran: Borujerdi Expects Japan To Continue Credit Package

LD0805092196 *Tehran IRNA in English*
0746 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 8, IRNA — Japan as an independent country will not bow to the pressure of others and will fulfil its commitments to Iran, Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi was quoted as saying in an interview with the English daily 'IRAN NEWS' printed Wednesday.

Borujerdi, who is in charge of Asia-Pacific affairs at the foreign ministry, stressed that the principles and policies of the Japanese will compel Tokyo to honor the agreements it made with other countries.

Japan extended a 38.6 billion yen (dlsr. 460 million) loan to Tehran as first installment of a credit package signed in mid-1994, for the construction of a hydroelectric power plant in the country.

Referring to the second installment that is expected to exceed 40 billion yen, he said, "this will be paid by Japan...I have no doubt that Tokyo will fulfil its commitment." Turning to Tehran's ties with the two Koreas, the paper reported Borujerdi as underlining Iran's relations with both North and South Korea.

He mentioned continuing bilateral visits between officials of the Islamic Republic and North Korea, and pointed out to the significant economic and trade exchanges with South Korea worth some dlsr. two billion annually.

Reiterating Tehran's readiness to help in dispelling the tension in the Korean peninsula, he said, "our suggestion is that both countries sit at the negotiating table, sort out their differences and achieve a desirable peace."

As to Iran's views on Turkey, the deputy foreign minister underlined good and friendly relations with Ankara, but stressed on Iran's strong opposition to Turkey's military pact with Israel, the sworn enemy of the Islamic world. He told the paper that Turkish President Suleiman Demirel is to visit Tehran soon to confer with President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani on bilateral, regional and international [words indistinct]

Borujerdi is currently in Beijing, China on a working visit.

Iran: Minister on Gulf Ties, U.S. 'Aggression'
MM0705140696 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
7 May 96 p 4

[Interview with Iranian Defense Minister Mohammad Foruzandeh by Muhammad al-Makki Ahmad in Doha; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ahmad] Qatari Amir Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani received you on Sunday [5 May]. What was discussed at the meeting?

[Foruzandeh] The meeting dealt with the friendly relations between Iran and Qatar. I met with his highness the amir and Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Abdallah Al Thani, Qatari minister of state for defense affairs and deputy commander in chief of the Armed Forces. The talks broached the friendship between us and our Qatari brothers.

[Ahmad] You said in Doha that military cooperation is on the cards and possible between Qatar and Iran. Can you clarify this point, are there any steps in connection with military cooperation such as conducting

joint maneuvers, and what form is this cooperation taking?

[Foruzandeh] When I spoke about military cooperation I meant to say that the aim of my visit is to strengthen and reinforce relations between the two countries and to hold talks on the type of military cooperation.

[Ahmad] Do you mean that you are currently discussing the issue and have not yet achieved results?

[Foruzandeh] We will announce any results we reach, God willing.

[Ahmad] Are you satisfied with the results of your visit to Qatar?

[Foruzandeh] Yes. The talks were held in an atmosphere of friendship and amity.

[Ahmad] Will you visit another Gulf state soon?

[Foruzandeh] I hope so.

[Ahmad] How would you assess Iran's relations with the Gulf states at present?

[Foruzandeh] We are seeking friendly and brotherly relations with the Gulf states. We already have friendly relations with most states in the region. And of course there are more developed relations. The Islamic Republic [of Iran] is trying to develop its relations with the states in the region and all neighboring states.

We believe that strengthening relations among states of the region is in the interests of these states and achieves stability for them.

[Ahmad] Is there a new Iranian strategy for cooperation, especially as some Gulf states are accusing Iran of undermining their stability?

[Foruzandeh] That is propaganda and rumors promoted by the Americans to serve their interests. Iran seeks stability in the region. It believes that the interests of the region's states lie in the region's stability. But the propaganda war is being waged by the United States, whose aim is to sell arms, spread fear, and justify the U.S. presence in the region.

[Ahmad] Do you not believe that what Iran has said in the past about exporting the revolution has aroused fears among Arab states?

[Foruzandeh] The region is Muslim and believes in Islam, and its people are a Muslim people.

[Ahmad] Does that mean that there is no such thing as "exporting the revolution" now?

[Foruzandeh] Exporting the revolution means spreading the authentic [asil] Islam.

[Ahmad] Has there been any development in Iran's relations with some of the region's states such as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?

[Foruzandeh] That question should be addressed to the (Iranian) foreign minister.

[Ahmad] There is the islands problem between Iran and the United Arab Emirates [UAE]. Is there anything new, is there Qatari mediation in this connection, and how do you view a solution?

[Foruzandeh] I participated in the Abu Dhabi defense exhibition last year at the invitation of the UAE defense minister, and a good understanding was reached with the minister on the fact that the islands issue is an issue between the two countries and thus they will resolve it without the intervention of others.

[Ahmad] Whom do you mean by others?

[Foruzandeh] The United States, for example. We can resolve this issue. The negotiation process had started between Iran and the UAE, and it will continue. We hope to resolve this question through negotiations.

[Ahmad] Binford Peay, commander in chief of the U.S. Central Command, announced that Iran is seeking to develop long-range missiles and building tunnels along the northern coast of the Gulf to protect these missiles. Is that true?

[Foruzandeh] It is U.S. propaganda against Iran, which has officially denied and refuted it.

[Ahmad] Do you believe that this U.S. campaign is a mobilization attempt with a view to launching a strike against Iran? Are you expecting a U.S. attack?

[Foruzandeh] U.S. aggression against Iran is declared and clear. Those lies fall within the framework of the propaganda war.

[Ahmad] Are you expecting U.S. military action against Iran, and is Tehran ready for it?

[Foruzandeh] If the United States wants to carry out a military action against Iran, it should ask the Americans first. Iran would retaliate appropriately to any U.S. aggression.

[Ahmad] What is your opinion of the recent U.S.-Israeli military agreement, and do you expect it to lead to aggression against other states, including Iran?

[Foruzandeh] That agreement confirms that what Israel is saying about peace in the region is unrealistic. While the Zionist entity claims to be seeking peace, it continues to work to strengthen itself [militarily].

[Ahmad] In Iran's view, how can peace be achieved?

[Foruzandeh] What peace?

[Ahmad] The peace in the Middle East region...between the Arabs and the Israelis!

[Foruzandeh] Ask the foreign minister.

[Ahmad] What is Iran's view of peace in the Middle East?

[Foruzandeh] We believe that there should be stability and peace among Islamic states.

[Ahmad] Does Iran not believe in peace with Israel?

[Foruzandeh] Israel is aggressive at present, and we should deal with Israeli aggression appropriately.

[Ahmad] There is a European role aimed at initiating a dialogue and cooperating with Iran. The Europeans have opened up to Iran. How does Iran assess this role?

[Foruzandeh] Iran's relations with Europe are good.

[Ahmad] Iran has announced huge military maneuvers, and there have been numerous interpretations as to what the aims are. Is there a message for the United States?

[Foruzandeh] Any country conducts maneuvers to enhance military preparedness. Iran, like other states, conducts such maneuvers.

Iran: TEHRAN TIMES Calls For Nuclear Rules To Apply to Israel

LD0705181196 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English
2 May 96 p2

[Unattributed editorial: "Grapes of Wrath Can Go Both Ways"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres said early this week that Iran has the potential to possess nuclear weapons in four years. Contrary to his earlier threats, Peres for the first time said that Israel would not necessarily launch a pre-emptive strike against Iran.

Israel should realize that it cannot act like a gendarme in the region. We have made it clear in this column that, if Israel dared to attack Iran, the Islamic Republic is strong enough to retaliate.

The Israelis have tried hard not to accept this reality. But the unfolding of events in Lebanon has brought home to the Israelis that they are not as invincible as they used to imagine.

When Israel launched its offensive in Lebanon on 12th April, the Israelis thought they would finish the Hezbollah within a couple of days. But in practice they proved to be vulnerable vis-a-vis a salvo of Katyushas

fired by the Hezbollah. This has brought home to the Israeli officials that it is not that easy to attack Iran. Iran is strong enough to strike back.

This is not the first time the Zionist officials accuse Iran of planning to develop nuclear weapons. Not only the Zionists, but U.S. officials, too, especially President Clinton, have levelled baseless accusations against Iran in this regard.

These accusations are unfounded. Iran's nuclear activities are under close surveillance of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Iran is a signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Israel, however, is neither a signatory to the NPT, nor does it allow the IAEA to inspect its nuclear installations. A clear case of double standard. Despite Israeli silence on the matter, it is an established fact that today Israel possesses more than 200 nuclear warheads.

Israel is neither under pressure from international bodies to open its nuclear installations to IAEA inspection, nor is Israel's potential threat to regional peace a matter of concern to the West. The Zionists and the United States only project Iran as a threat. In other words, they can kill us, but we are not even entitled to defend ourselves!

If international bodies are interested in peace in the Middle East, they should play fair: Require Israel to open its nuclear installations to international supervision, curb Israeli terrorism and assess its record on human rights.

Iran: Followers of Imam's Line Coalition 'Ready To Negotiate'

LD0705230996 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 2 May 96
p4

[Unattributed article: "ABRAR's Interview With Coalition of the Imam's Line and Servants of Construction"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The coalition of the "Followers of the Imam's Line" has announced its readiness to negotiate with "Servants of Construction Group."

In an interview with the ABRAR parliamentary correspondent, Mohammad Salamati, secretary general of the Islamic Revolution Mojahedin Organization and a member of the Followers of the Imam's Line Coalition, said: When we feel that we have consensus with the "Servants of Construction," we will take the initiative to talk to them, and we are also ready to negotiate with them if they take the first step, because the principle is that no particular faction should be able to determine the policy of the Majles and the country.

He added: Although forces within the system have different opinions on certain policies, this does not mean that they may not have consensus in some cases. They

can work easily with each other, but this cannot be described as a coalition.

Concerning the programs of the "Followers of the Imam's Line" in the Fifth Majles, he said: The priorities and programs that we will have in the Fifth Majles are: Amending the law on taxation in the interest of the deprived strata; strengthening, developing, and paying special attention to the cooperative sector; expanding public ownership through the development of public shareholding companies; expanding the law on social security; and approving laws which can prevent the concentration of wealth in the hands of certain people.

Salamati referred to the aims of the "Followers of the Imam's Line" in the Fifth Majles and said: We believe in progress, contrary to a particular faction which is not on good terms with progress, although there is a hint of progress in their slogans.

We believe that social justice is above progress, that is to say, social justice must be considered in any development program which will be implemented.

On the policy of adjustment, it should be said that the government is trying in practical ways to avoid the implementation of the policy because of some problems. For example, at present, the value of the foreign exchange rate is controlled, imports are not totally free, the price of certain items is also controlled, and the payment of subsidies to certain goods is still continuing. Therefore, the government is not in line with its policy of adjustment.

The secretary general of the Islamic Revolution Mojahedin Organization stressed: We believe that the private sector is still incapable of removing unemployment and resolving the problem of employment. Therefore, it is necessary that the state sector should look at the issue.

He further said: We feel that the country's independence is being threatened by a specific faction because of imposing special policies. At present, economic independence and freedom are also facing danger, because the majority faction has created this threat through accepting the adjustment policy. Therefore, the coalition of the "Followers of the Imam's Line" will make efforts to somehow prevent the implementation of an adjustment policy.

A member of the Presidium of the Islamic Majles said: It is unlikely that the "Servants of Construction Group" and the coalition of the "Followers of the Imam's Line" will form a coalition because of ideological differences.

Speaking to the 'ABRAR' parliamentary correspondent, Sayyed Mohammad Mohsen Yahyavi, Tehran's deputy and member of the Majles' oil affairs commission, said:

It is a natural process for the factions to cooperate and to be united in the Majles. However, as the members of coalition of the "Followers of the Imam's Line" are extremists and have specific ideas, and also have differences with the "Servants of Construction", therefore there is a very weak possibility that the two will get closer. If such a rapprochement were to take place, it would be for the sake of confronting Jame'eh-yeh Ruhaniyat-e Mobarez [Militant Clergy Association].

On the future of the "Servants of Construction Group," he said: The survival of the group depends on its programs. It should be said that no one objects to the formation of a legal structure in the country. If they wish, they can raise their ideas in society and there are no legal restrictions on the issue. Therefore, if President Rafsanjani's term in office ends, they can still continue their activities. In fact, their presence does not depend on the president himself.

The Tehran deputy expressed his views about the results of elections for the Fifth Majles said: I believe the Militant Clergy Association has gained a majority on the basis of facts and figures. Another group has also declared that they have won the majority. We should wait and see when the Fifth Majles begins its session to find out which group has gained the majority.

Iran: Possibility of Ministers Being Censured by Majles Increases

LD0705190996 Tehran SALAM in Persian 2 May 96
p4

[FBIS Translated Text] The possibility of 'Ali Mohammad Besharati and Gholam Reza Foruzesh, the ministers of interior and construction jihad, being censured in the Majles has strengthened.

According to our correspondent, a proposal to censure separately the interior minister (in protest at the manner in which the elections were held) and the minister of construction jihad was signed recently by a number of deputies.

The proposal to censure the interior minister refers to cases such as violations of election regulations in Bijar, Ardebil, Torqabeh, Chenaran, and Zanjan, with the direct involvement of the governorates general and governorates; the Interior Ministry's inability to hold proper elections in Mashhad; not announcing the votes gained by one of the candidates in the first round and repeated violations in the second round; violations by election officials (governors general, governors, and district officers) in the constituencies of Malayer, Miyando'ab, Astara, and Khomeyn, which resulted in the election results in those constituencies being declared null and void by the Guardian Council; the elections in Esfahan,

Najafabad, and Na'in, which led to disputes and were ultimately declared null and void; violations in the Banab and Malekan constituencies, and the inefficiency of the towns' security officials in maintaining security and bringing the situation under control, which resulted in the deaths of a number of people; the clashes in Qazvin last year, which resulted from rash statements and interviews and exaggerated promises by the interior minister, and the Ministry's inability to bring them under control promptly; interference by Mr. Tabesh, head of the State Elections HQ [Headquarters], in favor of certain candidates, particularly those from Zanjan; open interference in rejecting the eligibility of certain candidates by some governors general, governors, etc.

Mr. Moqanniyan, the deputy for Bijar, said in an interview: The number of signatories to the motion to censure the interior minister has reached 12, but we intend to get more.

The motion to censure Gholam Reza Foruzesh, minister of construction jihad, was tabled yesterday by a number of deputies.

Our correspondent's attempts to obtain more information on the censure have been fruitless. However, it is said that the number of signatories has exceeded the minimum required number (10).

Meanwhile, in an interview with our correspondent, one of the signatories said: The motion to censure the minister of construction jihad has been tabled because of repeated violations of the law. He did not elaborate on the cases of violation, but in reply to a question as to whether there was any reference to violation of election regulations in the censure motion, he said: No, all the cases refer to issues before the elections.

It should be pointed out that, under Article 150 of the Majles internal regulations, a Majles deputy can, in accordance with Article 89 of the Constitution, censure a minister or ministers; that a censure motion can be tabled if it has been signed by at least 10 deputies. Under Article 151, a motion to censure a minister or ministers must be presented to the Majles Presidium at an open session and should clearly state the case or cases for the censure. The motion is then read out at that session, or the next, accepted without debate, and sent to the minister or ministers concerned.

Iran: Daily Views Role of Women in Majles*LD0705232496 Tehran SALAM in Persian 2 May 96 p7*

[Unattributed article entitled: "Women in the Fifth Majles"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The second round of the Majles elections has ended, completing one of the most sensational elections since the Islamic revolution victory. The names of the deputies who will serve in the Islamic Majles for the next four years have been declared.

Despite the analyses offered, we believe the most distinguished feature of these elections is the diversity of the candidates, including the true followers of the imam's line, some old friends, new faces, the independent candidates, and the remarkable presence of women in the arena, which used to be the domain of men's rivalry in the past.

In previous elections women have shown a willingness to compete for winning seats in the Majles. However, this time there is a considerable degree of transformation in the number and qualifications of the female candidates. That is, there were more than 179 women candidates from 84 constituencies, and many of them are specialists in various scientific spheres.

Another aspect of this transformation is that in several cities, women gained more votes than their male rivals. Unfortunately, a number of the successful female candidates did not win a seat in the Majles because the results of their constituencies have been declared null and void. These women, who will take their seat in the Fifth Majles, are affiliated to different factions with diverse views. Therefore, it is hoped that the Fifth Majles will be more dynamic and analytical. This would change some of the prejudgments on women's capabilities in the sphere of politics. [passage omitted]

Mrs. Fa'ezeh Hashemi was one of the candidates who won enough votes to enter the Majles after the first round. It will be her first time of taking a seat in the Majles. She is 30, married with two children, and has a BA degree in political studies. She is currently registered as a student, studying for an MA degree in international law.

Thanks to her progressive views on issues concerning women, including population control, sports for women, the need to appoint more women as top managers, and even the possibility of electing a woman as president, she won against 400 other candidates in the vast constituency of Tehran. Her votes were 27,000 less than those cast for the first winner, giving her the second

place among all the candidates competing for votes in Tehran.

Mrs. Hashemi is at present the deputy head of Iran's International Olympic Committee. She is also the head of a council for creating solidarity in sports among women in Islamic countries.

There will be several other new female faces in the fifth Majles. We hope to introduce them to our readers in the next edition of our paper, God willing.

Iran: Daily Blames Weak Management for Rising Bread, Other Prices*LD0705181596 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 2 May 96 p13*

[FBIS Translated Text] Economic news: The bread price rise throughout the country is a serious matter. Prices are rising despite the fact that the Government has increased the subsidy it pays for bread. However, the quality of the baked bread remains the same and the loaves are no bigger. Why are they more expensive then? What can justify a price rise of over 50 percent?

It seems as if the uncalculated decision to raise the price of bread was made in order to make the people angry with the bakers. A family of four will have to pay 300 rials per day more, assuming that they eat six loaves of Sangak [flat Iranian bread baked on pebbles] daily. This will hurt the poor harder, because bread is their main staple diet.

The prices of other commodities are rising in line with the bread prices. This is understandable, to the effect that one price rise will lead to price rises for other commodities, but the silence among state officials is never acceptable. The gentlemen working in the Flour and Bread Department of the Commerce Ministry, who are directly responsible for the supply and distribution of bread, should answer the people with regard to why the price of bread has risen. They boast about being in charge of billions of rials of public money, set aside for purchasing wheat and subsidizing bread. Why are they always trying to blame others for their own incompetence?

Who is responsible for the daily quarrels between the people and the bakers, which unfortunately occur early in the morning and ruin the day for the two sides? Successful and trustworthy managers are never afraid of explaining the truth to the people. If a circular is issued in this respect, it should be in written form and not be by word of mouth. A written circular is more valid and the issuing authority cannot deny it. Our people are zealous and patient. To ignore such a people under any circumstances is an offense. Those managers who turn

their backs on the people should no longer be tolerated in the state departments.

Pakistan

Pakistan: 7 Killed, 40 Injured in Bus Bombing Near Lahore

*BK0805045096 Hong Kong AFP in English
0440 GMT 8 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] LAHORE, Pakistan, May 8 (AFP) — At least seven people were killed and 40 injured when a bomb exploded early Wednesday [8 May] in a bus near here, in the second such attack in less than two weeks, police said.

The bomb detonated aboard the bus at Sheikhpura, some 25 kilometres (15 miles) west of here.

The death toll could rise, they said, as many people had sustained serious injuries.

On April 28, a bomb exploded on a bus at Bhai Pero near here, killing 52 people and leaving some 30 others wounded.

The government and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto blamed that blast on Indian secret service agents, but no one has claimed responsibility.

Pakistan: 5 Killed, 36 Injured in Bus Bombing in Sheikhpura

*BK0805062596 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network
in Urdu 0600 GMT 8 May 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] At least five people were killed and 36 others injured when a bomb exploded inside a passenger bus at Sheikhpura this morning. According to reports, the number of those killed and injured may rise further. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has strongly condemned this act of terrorism and said the terrorists will be dealt with firmly. Federal Information Minister Khalid Ahmad Kharal has condemned this act of terrorism and said the government will not forgive the criminals under any circumstances. Senior Minister of Punjab Mushtaq Awan has arrived at the hospital to see the injured. Further details are awaited.

Pakistan: Bhutto, Ministers Condemn Sheikhpura Bus Bombing

*BK0805083696 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas
Service in English 0800 GMT 8 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] There was a bomb blast in a passenger bus just in front of the district headquarters hospital, Sheikhpura, this morning, in which—according to confirmed reports—at least nine people were killed and 38 injured. The bus was coming from

Hafizabad to Sheikhpura. The injured have been shifted to different hospitals of Sheikhpura and Lahore. Local officials rushed to the spot and took up emergency relief measures.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has expressed her sense of deep shock and grief over the loss of valuable lives in the bomb blast. In a statement in Islamabad, the prime minister condemned in most strongest terms this dastardly act and expressed the resolve that the culprits involved in the explosion would be arrested and punished. She reaffirmed government's resolve to deal with terrorists with an iron hand. She said such dastardly incidents will intimidate neither the government nor the people, and there should no doubt about it. The government would not compromise with the terrorists and would fight them till the last of them is brought to the book. The prime minister directed the provincial authorities to mobilize all its resources to apprehend the culprits at all costs. She also directed it to provide best possible medical aid to the injured.

The federal minister for information and broadcasting, Mr. Khalid Ahmad Khan Kharal, condemned this heinous crimes and said such tactics cannot be allowed to succeed and the enemies of the people would not go unpunished. He said those involved in terrorism must be given exemplary punishment for this barbaric act.

The Punjab senior minister, Malik Mushtaq Ahmad Awan, along with Punjab health minister, rural, Mr. Ghulam Sarwar Khan, visited the civil hospital Sheikhpura to inquire about the health of those injured in the bomb blast. The senior minister directed the hospital administration to provide maximum possible medical facilities to the injured. He presented checks amounting to 10,000 rupees to each injured person and 30,000 rupees to heirs of the families of those who lost their lives in the bomb blast.

Pakistan: Bhutto Leaves for 2-Day Official Visit to Sweden

*BK0705113896 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network
in English 1100 GMT 7 May 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto left Islamabad this afternoon for Stockholm on a two-day official visit to Sweden. She was accompanied among others by the defense minister, Mr. Aftab Shaban Mirani; special assistant for economic affairs, Mr. Shahid Hassan Khan; and special assistant for social sector, Begum Shahnaz Wazir Ali. The visit will provide the prime minister with an opportunity to exchange views with the Swedish leaders on the emerging international political scene, regional security environment, and bilateral relations.

During her visit, she will hold talks with the Swedish prime minister, Mr. Goeran Persson. She will also call on the king of Sweden, Carl Gustaf, and Queen Sylvia. The executives of various Swedish business corporations are scheduled to meet the prime minister. She will also address the Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs of the Swedish Parliament.

Pakistan: Defense Minister—No Danger of War With India

BK0705114296 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 7 May 96 pp 1, 11

["Staff report"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, May 6 — Defense Minister Aftab Shaban Mirani has said that the situation on borders is normal and there is no danger of war between India and Pakistan. He however, expressed grave concern of his government about the rise of Human Rights violations in Indian Held Kashmir under the garb of maintenance of law and order during the farce of elections in the valley.

Talking to the journalists at the Armed Forces Day of United Arab Emirates Monday [6 May] evening, Mr. Mirani said Pakistan was fully aware and prepared for its defense and its armed forces were ever vigilant about the security environment of the region.

Mr. Mirani said country's defense requirements were being met properly and as and when required Pakistan will induct more weapon systems into its services. He said during the official visit of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto to Sweden, he will be meeting with the Swedish defense officials to find ways and means to improve defense relations between the two countries. He said Pakistan will not be examining the procurement of Gripen fighter as Pressler embargoes were also applicable to the Swedish fighter. He also confirmed that Moscow had refused to supply SU 27s fighters to Pakistan due to political impediments though Pakistan was very keen to acquire them. He said that Pakistan was still examining the Mirage 2000-5 option as the complicated issue of supplier's credit has not been sorted out. He said negotiations are in progress and the moment the PAF [Pakistan Air Force] informed the government about the settlement, Pakistan will take a decision. He said that though the government had received 124 million US\$ from USA, it has not been decided to divert the money to the PAF.

Pakistan: 'Indian Agents' Arrested for Involvement in Hospital Blast

BK0805103096 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 8 May 96 pp 1, 11

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Islamabad, May 7 — The government has arrested six Indian agents for their alleged involvement in the bomb blast at Shaukat Khanum Memorial Hospital, Lahore last month, revealed Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Arif Nakai while talking to the reporters at PML (J) [Pakistan Muslim League-Junejo] House here on Tuesday [7 May].

Nakai said that identity of the suspects was not being disclosed to avoid any hampering in the proper investigation. But the nation, he added, would be apprised of the details of those who masterminded this tragic incident as soon as the investigations were completed.

Commenting over the law and order situation in the province the Chief Minister said tight security measures have been taken to check the movement of terrorists and expressed the hope that with the cooperation of the masses authorities would be able to avoid repetition of blasts in the province. [passage omitted]

Pakistan: Editorials View Imran Khan's Allegations Against Government

BK0705123196

[FBIS Report] Two English-language Pakistani newspapers published in Islamabad carry editorials on 7 May commenting on former cricketer Imran Khan's entry into politics and his accusation, among other things, that the intelligence services may have been responsible for an explosion at a hospital he founded.

THE NEWS carries a 435-word editorial on page 7 entitled: "Imran's Woes." It says: "On his debut in politics it was expected that Imran Khan would put his best foot forward. That he has not. He is making all the moves that the traditional, run of the mill, jejune politicians make. He is crying foul-play when the play has not even begun; he is seeing conspiracies all around him when none really exists.

"His accusation that the government and the intelligence agencies are behind the unfortunate bomb blast in his hospital are proof of this. He has no evidence to substantiate his charge which implicates in its general sweep the elected representatives and the heads of the intelligence agencies in the most grievous crime of committing terrorism against their own people."

The editorial adds: "Imran Khan's own delusions of grandeur aside, he is yet to become a threat to established political interests. He is a new-stager, and it will be a long time before he becomes a dread for old political sweats."

The paper continues: "As for his other complaint of being harassed and bullied, this could be true. Governments have a tendency to worry those who pester them. Strong-arm tactics are used. Telephones are bugged, tax wallahs [collectors] are let loose, inquiries are ordered into otherwise perfect financial transactions, and low-level workers are deputed to constantly tail the target. If all of this is indeed happening to Imran Khan, it is regrettable and the interior minister must ensure that it stops immediately.

"However, Mr Khan must know that all of this is part of politics; which is rough, tough and nasty. There are times when strategies are adopted that are less than gentlemanly and are meant to scare opponents away. Being a fast bowler Imran Khan should understand and, perhaps, accept this as part of the play.

"In his illustrious career there were many tenacious tail-enders whose heads he bashed and toes he injured because he could not get them out by, bowling nice and clean. He was not supposed to do it, but he did it all the same, for the ends mattered more than the means. By launching his Tehrik-i-Insaf [Movement for Justice], Imran has taken a conscious decision to jump into a dirty pool. If he wants to stay in there, he should stop complaining like a weakling, and focus on learning to swim hard."

THE NATION carries a 630-word editorial on page 6 entitled: "Rush to Judgment." The editorial reviews Imran Khan's allegations and says: "These statements must be subjected to scrutiny before they can be accepted simply on trust."

It adds: "Nevertheless, Imran Khan's accusation is a serious one and hence the onus of clearing the air is on the Federal Government. As far as the complaint of harassment and investigation by the intelligence agencies is concerned, reprehensible as it is in a democratic society, it may have caused more alarm to a person new to the ways of politics in Pakistan. Any ordinary political worker who has been through the mill could have enlightened Imran as to the 'practices' of the intelligence agencies where opponents of the incumbent government are concerned."

The editorial states that Imran Khan's accusing the government of dictatorship "betrays a woeful lack of familiarity with our experience of dictatorships under

which the people of Pakistan groaned for long years and fought against bravely till we saw the back of them."

In conclusion, the paper states: "All this is pretty basic stuff, but perhaps it will take Imran a little while and a little more experience in politics to realise the lay of the land."

Pakistan: Afghan Delegation Holds Talks on Bilateral Relations

BK0705141196 Islamabad PTV Television Network
in English 1300 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Islamabad today, a six-member Afghan delegation led by the minister for transport, Mr. 'Abdol Ghaffar Sayem, held a meeting with Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali. During the talks, the two sides discussed the situation in Afghanistan and bilateral relations, apart from various projects related to opening of trade routes among Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. Matters relating to construction of oil and gas pipeline and rail tracks connecting these countries also came up for discussion. During the meeting, the issue of compensation for burning the Pakistan Embassy in Kabul was also raised and various modalities for reconstruction and provision of temporary accommodation were discussed.

The foreign minister during the meeting conveyed Pakistan's concern at the continued instability in Afghanistan and stressed the need for all Afghan leaders to meet together and resolve their differences peacefully. He said Pakistan is willing to assist in any way which the Afghans consider necessary for achieving the goal of national reconciliation in their country. The visiting Afghan minister appreciated Pakistan's role for achieving peace in his country and stressed the need for continued negotiations to discuss bilateral relations and economic and technical cooperation between the two countries.

Pakistan: Minister Hints at Resumption of Talks on Karachi

BK0705141796 Islamabad PTV Television Network
in English 1300 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The federal minister for law, justice, and parliamentary affairs, professor N.D. Khan, has hinted at resumption of talks between the government and Altaf Group on the Karachi situation within the current month. Briefing newsmen in Islamabad today, Professor N.D. Khan, who is also the leader of the government's negotiating team, said he has received positive signals from the Altaf Group recently. He said the government has always held the view that dialogue

is the only solution of problems in a democratic setup and it is a good omen that the other side has also realized the need for negotiations. The federal minister said law and order situation in Karachi has considerably improved and, thus, the major obstacle in the success of the talks has been removed.

Pakistan: Further on Discussions With Afghan Delegation

BK0805110196 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English
8 May 96 pp 1, 11

[Report by Aroosa Alam and Tahir Dhindsa]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, May 7 — Accepting the fast changing political realities in the region and on the persuasion of US as well as Iran, Islamabad has finally agreed to accept a token compensation from President Rabbani for the human loss and the reconstruction of Pakistani mission in Kabul.

After this face-saving arrangement President Rabbani and President Farooq Khan Leghari will now feel comfortable to sit across the table at the forthcoming ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] Summit in Ashgabat to discuss various agreements reached between the member states in the last ECO summit in Islamabad.

But the truce between Islamabad and Kabul has opened another gigantic task for the two sides to tackle the formidable Taleban, often called the brainchild of Pakistan. The Talebans have been knocking at the door-step of Kabul for the last many months causing severe damage to the civilian population living in Kabul.

According to an official handout issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs this afternoon, a six-member Afghan delegation headed by 'Abdol Ghaffar Sayem, Minister for Transport, held discussions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the Foreign Minister and officials of the Ministry of Communications.

The talks focused on the situation in Afghanistan, bilateral relations as well as various projects relating to opening of trade routes between Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan and construction of gas pipelines and railways connecting these countries.

According to official sources the issue of compensation for the burning of the embassy of Pakistan in Kabul in September 1995 was also raised and various modalities for payment reconstruction and provision of temporary accommodation were discussed. This development indicates that Pakistan will soon send its diplomatic staff to Kabul.

As has been earlier disclosed by The Muslim Iran had proposed to Pakistan to host an Intra-Afghan conference in Islamabad to be participated by President Rabbani and Taleban besides all other major Afghan leaders. The Afghan delegation conveyed the willingness of President Rabbani to sit and negotiate with warring opposition parties.

During the discussions the Foreign Minister conveyed Pakistan's concern at the continued instability in Afghanistan and stressed the need for all Afghan leaders to meet together and resolve their differences peacefully.

It is believed that after the visit of Foreign Secretary Najamuddin Sheikh to Moscow, the modalities of intra-Afghan conference would be announced.

The Afghan Minister appreciated Pakistan's efforts for restoring peace in Afghanistan and stressed the need for continued negotiations to discuss bilateral relations and economic and technical cooperation between the two countries. After an uneasy spell of distrust and a long series of trading charges against each other, this is the first ministerial level contact between Kabul and Islamabad in last 10 months.

After having been bellowed out by Russia and India from Afghanistan foreign policy perspective Pakistan was able to secure lukewarm guarantees from the Kabul regarding non-acceptance of Indian interference during Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali's visit to Kabul last August.

In pursuance of that agreement, Kabul and Islamabad subsequently agreed to establish a joint commission to sort out bilateral issues. Simultaneously Rabbani government agrees to host a three-nation conference for laying of a gas pipeline and to participate in four-nation moot to be hosted by Pakistan to discuss construction of roads and railway links from Central Asia to Pakistan.

In light of today's discussions between the two sides, it is expected that Pakistan will soon host a four nation moot in Islamabad for the finalisation of agreements for the construction of roads and railway links.

Road Building: The visiting Afghan Minister also discussed the proposal to split the issue of building of highways in Afghanistan from other political issues between Rabbani's government and Pakistan. In today's meeting at the foreign office which was also attended by Shahid Aziz Siddiqui, Chairman National Highway Authority, different aspects of the proposal were discussed threadbare.

There were some differences in the position of the two sides, as to whether all the problems of the war-torn Afghanistan should be pinned together or the

issues of building trans-Afghanistan highway should be separated and given priority over other issues. The trans-Afghan highway which will connect Chaman with Kandahar and Hirat is vital to the economic life of Afghanistan, as it will serve as a route for the transit trade between the Central Asian states and rest of the world, through Afghanistan. During the current visit of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari to Saudi Arabia the matter came under discussion and it was agreed to put on the rail the economic life of the region and the war-torn Afghanistan.

According to an official source the Rabbani government is still insisting on finding a political solution of Afghanistan first. In case an agreement is reached between the two governments to start the highway building project, the Islamic Development Bank is likely to finance its initial cost. The bank had offered this loan during the previous government of Nawaz Sharif.

Pakistan: France Reportedly Offers New Mirage Package

BK0705122996 Islamabad THE NEWS in English
7 May 96 p 12

[Report by Shakil Shaikh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — France has offered a new package to Pakistan for the sale of its fighter-bomber Mirage 2000-5, official sources told THE NEWS on Monday [6 May].

"The fresh package is far better than the previous one," said the sources privy to recent two-day talks between officials of the Pakistan Air Force and a French team which left Pakistan Sunday after spending two days here.

Officials said the talks have made a clear headway as all the technicalities involved in the proposed sale-purchase of Mirage aircraft were discussed threadbare.

Pakistan Air Force, said the sources, is now looked almost satisfied with the "new package" depending on the financial aspects to be dealt with by the Defense Production Division.

The same 8-member French team will again visit Pakistan on May 15, with an addition of 7 more officials of French government and Dassault, manufacturer of Mirage aircraft, for more discussions. The team is due a day before Foreign Secretary Najamuddin Shaikh leaves for Moscow for holding talks with Russian officials.

"We are very close to strike a deal with France and the May 15 delegation will now hold talks on the financial aspects as well," said the sources.

Air Chief Marshal Abbas Khattak has already confirmed that Pakistan is interested in buying 30 to 32 Mirage 2000-5, the political clearance of which has already been accorded by French President Chirac.

Pakistan: 'Sources' Cited on Decision To Buy Tanks From Ukraine

BK0805102796 Islamabad THE NEWS in English
8 May 96 p 12

[Report by Shakil Shaikh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — In line with its doctrine of aggressive defense coupled with rapid retaliation, Pakistan has finally decided to acquire 300 to 400 Main Battle Tanks (MBT) from Ukraine.

"We have invited officials from Kiev to settle the terms and conditions for deal around \$400 to 600 million," said highly-placed official sources. They said "Pakistan-Ukraine sale/purchase talks for T-80UD ('U' being an abbreviation for the Russian word for improved, and 'D' for diesel) will kick off from third week of this month. Ukraine has confirmed the visit of its high-level team to finalize the deal, sources said.

Following extensive trials for last two years, a request was made to Defense Production Division for negotiations with Ukraine. Pakistan for the first time will buy tanks which are manufactured by a country belonging to the Commonwealth of Independent States which got independence from former Soviet Union some years back.

"The price offered is almost one third to its contemporary Western competitors, yet at 48 tonnes its is about 10 tonnes lighter," said the sources.

"The T-80UD is the latest version of the basic T-80 design. The design continues on what have become classic principles for Soviet and now Russian and Ukrainian MBTs in the post-war period, combining many tried-and tested features with some innovations," said the sources.

At the international arms market, the T-80 MBT initially emerged like some fantasy creature from the catacombs of the then secretive armament industry at the beginning of the 80s. The vehicle, still a development of the T-64 family but an overall much more modern design than the T-72, made a considerable impression in the West, despite the fact that the leading NATO armies were already operating quite powerful tanks. This was further compounded by the fact that the veil of secrecy shrouding this latest Soviet MBT was only lowered bit by bit over the years; in particular, the ability to fire anti-tank guided missiles (ATGMs) through the main gun only came to light later.

Ukraine, said officials, has developed this tank, and is now being pushed hard on the world export markets against Western platforms such as LeClerc and Abrahms.

The T-80UD is considered a realistic option based on immediate availability and delivery with guaranteed spares and maintenance support.

International reports say that Pakistan has about 1,500 MBTs while the India has about 3,500. The Indian Army has some 500 T-55s, 1,400 plus T-72M AJEYAs (increasing), 1,250 Vijayantas, 90 PT-76 light. On the other hand, Pakistan Army has about 1,500 T-85IAPs, M-47s/48s, 51, T-55s, T-69s, T-59s and T-60/63 light. India has also completed trials of indigenously-built Arjun the serial production of which will begin soon. Pakistan, however, is still holding trials of its nationally-developed Al-Khalid MBT 2000.

Pakistan has been struggling since the times of late General Asif Nawaz to induct modern MBTs. Asif Nawaz was very close to buy Polish T-72 and the deal was almost finalised, but his demise due to heart ailment in early 1993. [sentence as published]

Pakistan: Voter Turnout in Kashmir 'Very Poor'

BK0705134496 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In occupied Kashmir, life remained totally paralyzed today in the valley and the Doda District of Jammu region due to protest strike against fake parliamentary polls in Jammu and Ladakh. Despite threats by the military authorities to deter people from going on strike, all bazaars, business establishments, private and government offices, schools and colleges, courts and banks remained close and transport was off the road. The strike call was given by the All Parties Hurriyat Conference to practically demonstrate the Kashmiri people's rejection of the Indian polls ploy in occupied Kashmir. A senior leader of the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, Mohammad Yasin Malik, reacting to the forcible polls drama in occupied Kashmir, said such a farce would only bring further disrepute to India. The Kashmiri people, he reiterated, were determined to achieve the goal of liberation.

Reports received in Srinagar from Jammu say the turnout at polling station was very poor despite the continued heavy military pressure to encourage the voters in Jammu to cast their votes. The local people also suspected that most of the so-called voters appear to be policemen and military personnel in civilian dress. Meanwhile, more troops are being rushed to the occupied valley for the polls ploy. According to KMS [KASHMIR MEDIA SERVICE] correspondent,

military convoys are seen travelling on Jammu-Srinagar highway for deployment at various places. Military contingents are also being air lifted.

Elsewhere in the held-valley, there are reports of continued Indian brutal operation during which 10 more people were killed.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Navy Kills 2 'Terrorists' in Vettalaikerny

BK0705114796 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Sri Lanka Navy killed two terrorists in Vettalaikerny when they tried to jump overboard last night. A naval gunboat severely damaged the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] boat forcing the terrorists to jump into the water. The operational headquarters of the Ministry of Defense in a news release this morning said a group of security forces came under RPG [Rocket-Propelled Grenade] attack while they were constructing bunkers in Kodikamam in the Thenamarachchi Division. This incident took place at 1000 yesterday. Troops retaliated with small arms fire causing casualties among the terrorists. One soldier was killed and two others wounded during the confrontation. The casualties were evacuated to the Palaly base hospital.

Five thousand persons who have found temporary shelter in Vavuniya are to be resettled in Jaffna. Many of them had left their homes and arrived in Vavuniya and surrounding areas due to the LTTE pressure. Vavuniya district secretary told the SLBC [Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation] that these Tamil civilians were willing to return to areas liberated by the security forces under Operation Riviresa Two. The district secretary said that arrangements will be made to resettle them from this week. Civilians fleeing the north to Vavuniya since the launch of Riviresa Two operations has declined by 90 percent. On average between 1,000 and 1,500 had been returning to Vavuniya daily. This has now decreased to between 100 and 150. The Tamil civilians are willing to live in areas which are under the control of the security forces. According to the district secretary this is the main cause for the decline in the numbers leaving the north to Vavuniya.

Sri Lanka: Minister Says Government Committed To Resolve Ethnic Issue

BK0705125196 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 7 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sri Lanka has been able to establish very important business contacts in London despite the adverse publicity launched by the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] in England. An 18-member business delegation led by minister of internal and external trade, commerce and food, Kingsley Wickremaratna, visited London and explained to prospective entrepreneurs of the general situation in Sri Lanka. In his address to the corporate members of the Asia House, which is a highly reputed institution in the UK, Minister Wickremaratna reiterated the government's commitment to find a lasting solution to the ethnic issue through a power sharing basis. He said that the government would implement the devolution package to bring about a lasting solution to the Tamil community [word as heard], with or without the LTTE.

The minister said that nearly 300,000 displaced Tamil civilians, who were under the control of the LTTE, have returned to their homes in liberated areas. The people of Jaffna had endorsed their confidence on President Chandrika Kumaratunga and her government and their dissatisfaction over the ruthless administration of the LTTE. The minister told the businessmen that redevelopment of the infrastructure in the liberated areas was underway. When asked whether the current situation affects the foreign investment, Minister Wickremaratna cited the example of Shell International's entry into the Sri Lanka business scene and their plans for further expansion. Corroborating the minister's view, senior adviser to the Shell International, (Andrew Wood), who was at the meeting, said that they were extremely happy with the operations in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka: LTTE Dispatch Reports Offensive on Troops, Police Station

BK0705163096 (Internet) Tamil Eelam News WWW in Tamil 6 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A Sri Lankan military contingent, which was on a foot patrol along the Batticaloa-Polonnaruwa border area, was attacked by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE]. The military suffered heavy casualties when the LTTE intercepted and launched a surprise attack on the patrol party. A reinforcement contingent, which was rushing to the spot, was intercepted and attacked by another contingent of the LTTE. International news agencies have reported that 12 soldiers were killed and 18 others seriously in-

jured in the attack. There is no report from the headquarters about this offensive.

The police station at Thoppur in the Trincomalee District was attacked and destroyed by the LTTE. Two policemen were killed in the attack that took place the day before yesterday. Others managed to escape with injuries. The LTTE brought the police station under their control and shifted arms and ammunition after the attack, which lasted for only 10 minutes. The LTTE did not incur any loss in this successful offensive. Two Kfir jet planes belonging to the Sri Lankan Air Force conducted bombing raids on Pooneryn locality. There is no report of the damages caused by these bombing raids.

The Sri Lankan Government has halted the supply of rations to the people who immigrated to Wanni after the launch of Operation Riviresa-Two. The announcement was sent to Kilinochchi Secretariat. The government issued this directive after the Kilinochchi Secretariat sent an urgent message to the government saying that the stock of essential food items has been exhausted. The message also carries an appeal for the immediate dispatch of rations to meet the urgent requirements of food. Secretariat sources have stated that this announcement has shocked them. Meanwhile, consultations have been held with nongovernmental organizations to help meet the food and drinking water needs of the displaced people. A Kilinochchi Secretariat official has stated that because of this tough and inhuman attitude of the Sri Lankan Government, the people, who fled to save their lives from the military action, are facing bouts of starvation.

Hundreds of Tamil travelers were sent back from Tandikkulam yesterday as well. These travelers, who were waiting at Tandikkulam to proceed to the south, were sent back for no reason. Tamil groups from Colombo are desirous of going to and functioning in the areas overrun by Sri Lankan Government troops. It is to be noted that these groups, who are already working in collusion with the troops in the occupied areas, have set up their camps in the vicinity of military camps and are functioning as stooges and accomplices to the troops in committing cold blooded murders and sexual misconduct. Meanwhile, these groups have requested the Sri Lankan Government grant them permission to set up their offices in the occupied areas. The perfidious groups from Colombo who have sought permission to open offices in the military controlled areas are: Eelam People's Democratic Party, Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front, People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam, and Sankararaji's [as published] Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students, and Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization. The alliance [Kootani] has pointed out that this is a meaningless step.

Thanks.

The Tigers' aspirations: Motherland of Tamil Eelam!

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